# “I am truly delighted, Sir, with the account you have given of my country” / “A most confused feeling inside”

Katherine Scarlett Cartwright

Petoskey, Michigan

B.A., University of Michigan, 2013

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the College of William & Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Lyon G. Tyler Department of History

The College of William and Mary
August 2016

# APPROVAL PAGE

This Thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Katherine Scarlett Cartwright

Approved by the Committee, 05/03/2016

Committee Chair
Associate Professor Kathrin Levitan, History
The College of William and Mary

Visiting Assistant Professor Guillaume Aubert, History
The College of William and Mary

Distinguished Associate Professor of American Studies and History Leisa Meyer
The College of William and Mary

## ABSTRACT

"I am truly delighted, Sir, with the account you have given of my country": How Early American Students Learned to Love their Country in the Geography Textbooks of Jedidiah Morse

Using age as a category of analysis the first paper in this M.A. Research Portfolio examines Jedidiah Morse's geography textbooks, the first geography textbooks written and published in the United States. By comparing and contrasting Morse's textbooks with the ages of his intended audiences in mind the paper argues that Morse manipulated his portrayal of geography and citizenship in order to cultivate in his young readers a love for their country.



## ABSTRACT

"A most confused feeling inside": Sexuality and American Girls Abroad in the Interwar Period

The second paper in this Research Portfolio studies the travel diaries of five teenage girls in the 1920s and 1930s. By interrogating moments when the girls wrote about alcohol, experimented with their clothing, encountered the opposite sex, and commented on gender norms it becomes clear that while they traveled the girls challenged prevailing white, middle and upper-middle class gender and sexual norms in the United States at this time. The girls' attention to sexuality both on their voyages and once in Europe reveals that their understanding of their sexual selves was not solely shaped by what they experienced within the United States but also by what they encountered beyond the country's borders.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This writer wishes to thank Professors Guillaume Aubert, Leisa Meyer, and Kathrin Levitan whose guidance these papers were written under. In particular, the author is grateful to Professor Aubert for his support during the first semester research seminar and patience when reading the various drafts of the first paper. The author is particularly thankful of the support and enthusiasm Professor Meyer provided during the second semester research seminar and would like to thank her for her detailed feedback throughout the second semester. Last but certainly not least, the author is indebted to Professor Levitan for her continual advising throughout the year and for reading both drafts of the papers submitted here.

The writer would also like to express extreme gratitude to her mother and father for their constant support and encouragement. Without them, this Research Portfolio would never have been undertaken.

This M.A. Research Portfolio is dedicated to my parents.

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF FIGURES

## Intellectual Biography

During the 2015-2016 school year I worked to complete the M.A. portion of my degree at William and Mary. This included doing coursework and working on the two research seminar papers in this portfolio. Although my projects are drastically different they reflect current shifts happening in the field of the History of Childhood and Youth. My first project used sources written *for* children and youth, while my second project studied sources written *by* children and youth. While both historical methods are useful, the field appears to be demanding the latter sources and placing a higher value on them.

For the Atlantic World research seminar I worked on a project that examined Jedidiah Morse's geography textbooks, the first geography textbooks written and published in the United States. I arrived at the project by reading secondary material on education and textbooks in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and originally hoped to study the impact of geography textbooks from Europe, namely Great Britain, in the United States and the gradual replacement of these textbooks with American authored texts. This project covered too much, however, and I ended up looking at Jedidiah Morse's textbooks because they were written for audiences of a variety of ages and thus allowed me to use age as a category of analysis. The textbooks were also online, which made the project feasible.

In order to strengthen this paper I will need to engage more secondary literature and find more primary evidence. I will particularly need to read literature on geography education and textbook production in Europe, along with scholarship that will allow me to explore the gender implications of the textbooks more fully. In terms of primary sources, I will need to contextualize the close readings of the texts I currently have with

publication and circulation information and also raise questions regarding the different editions of each textbook and the political and historical significance of the moments in which they were published. Ideally, I would strive to find information about particular schools using the books and perhaps student diaries or notebooks that indicate how the students actually used them. Overall, I enjoyed how this project allowed me to bring together the history of childhood and the history of education.

During winter break I found a topic to research for the Sexualities in Modern History Seminar. I originally planned to study a series of travel books written for children by Susan Hale in the late nineteenth century and her published letters. However, about a month into the semester I found a collection of 1920s and 1930s diaries written by boys and girls in their teens in Swem's Special Collections. I saw this as a good opportunity to do archival work and examine unstudied youth diaries and thus quickly changed gears and started working with the collection.

When I first found the diaries in Swem I hoped to look at all of them and bring together scholarship on girl youth culture and boy youth culture in the twentieth century. However, I was particularly intrigued by three of the diaries that girls wrote while they traveled abroad. I started with these diaries wondering what I would find. These diaries proved rich (and also time consuming to go through), thus, I ended up concentrating on the three. Three did not seem like enough, however, so I examined Swem's finding aids having to do with travel, women, and diaries and found a fourth diary to add to the group. The diary was not marked "teenager" but "woman" on the finding aid and thus I did not come across it at first. However, as the finding aid mentioned a high school I decided to have a look at it and, luckily, the girl (Rosalie McLeod) mentioned her age in her writing.

As I read my secondary sources on girl youth culture I also searched for the diaries the scholars used. I looked at the diaries' finding aids to see if they mentioned going abroad. The finding aids proved difficult to use because they rarely specified the writer's age (a common problem in the field of the History of Childhood and Youth). However, I did find a few that seemed to indicate that the girls were in their teens and traveled. I then emailed the archives and an archivist at Johns Hopkins sent me a girl's diary (Elizabeth Daum) to add to my group (in the last week or so I also heard back from an archivist at Smith College and it appears that they might have some more diaries by traveling youth in their teens). In terms of secondary literature, Nadine Zimmerli was particularly useful to talk to as she studies and is currently teaching a course on Americans in Europe.

Though I am a little disappointed with how the paper came together, I see a lot of potential in my sources. I think writing the paper was particularly difficult because of everything I wanted to cover: the girls' exploration of their sexuality, their consumption of news, politics, and art, their opinions about movies and international events, their family dynamics, their descriptions of the towns, museums, and countryside they visited, their use of foreign language, how they talked about American products in Europe, etc. As I wrote I also realized that there are a lot of gaps in my historiography. In order to fill in these gaps I will need to read more about youth culture, sexuality, and gender in Europe, along with scholarship on the exchange of youth culture between the United States and Europe. Some of this will be accomplished this summer by reading my Modern European comps list that has particular sections on gender/sexuality and family/youth culture. I also plan to continue working on the project in Professor Kitamura's research seminar on popular culture in the fall.

While I learned a lot doing each research project and enjoyed different aspects of them, working with sources actually written by youth is a direction I see my research going in. I hope I can find more diaries to add to the group of girls studied in my second semester paper and look forward to continuing to work on the project next semester.

**"I am truly delighted, Sir, with the account you have given of my country": How Early American Students Learned to Love their Country in the Geography Textbooks of Jedidiah Morse**

"Every citizen of the United States ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the Geography of his own country," wrote Jedidiah Morse in the *American Geography* (1789). Published five years after Morse's publication of *Geography made Easy* (1784), the first geography textbook written in the United States, this quotation captures the close relationship between geography education and citizenship in the early years of the American Republic. By 1795 Morse published a series of textbooks for all ages: an *Astronomical and Geographical Catechism* (1795) for children under eight years of age, *Elements of Geography* (1795) for children from eight to fourteen years old, the fourth edition of *Geography made Easy* (1794) for "the higher classes in Schools, and the lower classes in Academies" (students from about eleven to fifteen years old), and the *American Universal Geography* (1793) for more advanced audiences in colleges, those above fifteen years of age (see Table 1).[1]

Scholars who have studied Morse's publications argue that geography education was used to encourage citizens to imagine themselves as part of the nation. However, these scholars conflate Morse's child readers and adult readers and in doing so have

[1] Jedidiah Morse, preface to *The American Geography; or, A View of the Present Situation of the United States of America…* (Elizabethtown, NJ., 1789); *Elements of Geography…* (Boston, 1795), vii; *The American Universal Geography…* (Boston, 1793); *Geography made Easy: Being an Abridgement of the American Universal Geography* (Boston, 1794); [Caleb Bingham], *An Astronomical and Geographical Catechism* (Boston, 1795). See Table 1 for the textbooks' publication information. It is important to note that Caleb Bingham wrote *An Astronomical and Geographical Catechism*. Nonetheless, Morse acknowledged it in *Elements of Geography* as part of the series of textbooks. Like Morse, Bingham was born in Connecticut and spent much of his career in Boston. He was an accomplished textbook writer with influential works into the nineteenth century. The majority of my analysis comes from the geographies written between 1793 and 1795. Nonetheless, my survey of the various editions of *Geography made Easy* published between 1784 and 1793 reveals similarities regarding the topics analyzed in this paper. I must acknowledge that there are stark differences in the information presented due to obvious political developments during this time. As the geographies published between 1793 and 1795 are adaptations of the *Universal Geography*, I pivot my argument around these geographies in order to make an argument about age.

overlooked the relationship between geography, citizenship, and childhood in the early Republic. By comparing and contrasting Morse's textbooks with the ages of his intended audiences in mind it becomes clear that Morse manipulated his portrayal of geography and citizenship in order to cultivate in his young readers a love for their country. As Morse meant for young boys *and* young girls and both fathers *and* mothers to read his textbooks, Morse used geography to invite early Americans, even those who lacked political rights, to imagine themselves as citizens of the nation.[2]

Morse was born in Woodstock, Connecticut in 1761 to a father who had high expectations for his youngest son in the church. His father appealed to the governor of Connecticut during the Revolution claiming that his son's abilities as a student were more useful than his capabilities on the battlefield. Morse was thus exempt from active duty during the Revolution and arrived at Yale in 1779 to study under Ezra Stiles, the first president of Yale to expand the college's duties from merely producing ministers to training more practical professions, such as doctors and lawyers. Though Morse studied theology at Yale from 1779 to 1786 and accepted his position at the First Church in

[2] Important for this paper are scholars Martin Brückner and Susan Schulten who successfully demonstrate how early Americans used geography education in order to create a shared republican identity (see Brückner, *The Geographic Revolution in Early America: Maps, Literacy, and National Identity* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006) and Schulten, *Mapping the Nation: History and Cartography in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago, 2012)). For scholars who demonstrate the importance of using age as a category of analysis see Sara L. Schwebel, "Childhood Studies Meets Early America," in *Early American Literature* 50, no. 1 (2015); Anna Mae Duane, ed., *The Children's Table: Childhood Studies and the Humanities* (Athens, Ga., 2013); Jacqueline S. Reinier, *From Virtue to Character: American Childhood, 1775-1850* (New York, 1996); Karen Sánchez-Eppler, *Dependent States: The Child's Part in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Chicago, 2005). This paper particularly builds on the work of Courtney Weikle-Mills in *Imaginary Citizens: Child Readers and the Limits of American Independence, 1640-1868*. Important to mention, both Brückner and Weikle-Mills (the main scholars this paper engages) and others who study geography education and early American childhood draw on Benedict Anderson's ideas of "imagined communities," "map-as-logo," and "print-capitalism." See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 2006). The majority of work on the history of education concentrates on schools as institutions. This paper hopes to bring to light the necessity of intersecting the fields of childhood studies and the history of education.

Charlestown, Massachusetts in 1789, he found himself drawn to the economic benefits of writing.[3]

Like many New England ministers, Morse believed moral restraint, obedience, and self-sacrifice were fundamental to virtuous republican citizens and rooted in the citizen's Christian beliefs. In an ideal republic it was the government's responsibility to use law and order to uphold the virtue of its citizens. As will be seen, these beliefs permeated throughout Morse's geographies. Nonetheless, these views were at odds with the growing attitude that encouraged individualism, especially in pursuit of wealth. Thus, while there was Jedidiah Morse: the republican New England minister, there was also Jedidiah Morse: the "'father of American geography.'" Morse struggled with the tension between his duties as a minister and his desire to write throughout his life. Trying to justify his second profession to his father in 1785 Morse wrote, "my own country merits my first and greatest attention and as the Geography of it has hitherto been very incomplete, as well as inaccurate, I am disposed…to remove these inconveniencies." Written a year after the publication of Morse's first textbook this letter represents Morse's resolve in writing the geography of the new nation; his internal struggle would not keep him from the profession he enjoyed. More importantly, the letter illuminates Morse's devout patriotism and his belief that a correct knowledge of American geography was imperative for the new nation.[4]

---

[3] For biographical information on Morse see Richard J. Moss, *The Life of Jedidiah Morse: A Station of Peculiar Exposure* (Knoxville, TN., 1995), 1, x, xii, and 15-17; Ralph H. Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 31, no. 3 (September 1941), 147 (quote). Other biographers include Joseph W. Phillips, *Jedidiah Morse and New England Congregationalism* (New Brunswick, 1948). Morse did not write about the Revolution in any of his correspondence until after its success. See Moss, *The Life of Jedidiah Morse*, 30.

[4] Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," 147; Morse to his father, May 9, 1785, Yale in Moss, *The Life of Jedidiah Morse,* 51. For information on religion in Morse's textbooks see Penny S. Arnold, "Description of a Content Analysis of Elementary Geography Textbooks from 1789 to 1897" (PhD

Building off of John Locke's *Some Thoughts concerning Education* (1693) that stated children before the age of six should be able to point to any "'County in the Map of *England*," Morse saw geography education as fundamental to nation building. The European textbooks used in homes and schools before and immediately after the Revolution, however, were designated inadequate for educating Americans about their new nation. Through a "Made in America" stamp Morse continued the European tradition that closely linked geography education with the formation of a national character, yet provided his audiences with American authored texts.

Morse began his preface to the *American Geography*, "So imperfect are all the accounts of America hitherto published…that from them very little knowledge of this country can be acquired" and continued on to accuse Europeans of misleading their readers. As a new, independent nation Morse argued it was the country's duty, for themselves and the rest of the world, to end "this ignorance."[5] He included this Preface in his later publication of the *Universal Geography* (1793), yet added his intention and justification for replacing the current body of European geography textbooks used in American schools. Morse explained that a system of geography was needed since previous geographies composed in Europe were created for a European audience. Not only did *Guthrie's Geographical Grammar*, the predominant geography used in America, falsely describe the United States, using it "would be to instill into the minds of Americans, British ideas of America, which are far from being favourable or just."

---

diss. University of Akron, 1991), 49; Laurence M. Hauptman, "Westward Course of Empire: Geography Schoolbooks and Manifest Destiny, 1783-1893," *The Historian* XL, no. 3 (May 1978), 425; James H. Smylie, "American Millennium Visions, 1776-1800," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 77, no. 2 (Summer 1999), 121, 123. See also Edgar W. Knight, "An Early Case of Opposition in the South to Northern Textbooks," *Journal of Southern History* 13, no. 2 (May 1947), 245-64. Morse often intertwined his creationism through direct quotes from scripture.

[5] John Locke, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, ed. John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton (Oxford, 1989), sect. 178 in Brückner, *The Geographic Revolution*, 10.

Furthermore, the British geography focused its attention on Great Britain and Morse firmly believed that the United States should be the country Americans had the best acquaintance with. Morse created a clear connection between citizenship and geography in all of his textbooks: good American citizens needed a firm understanding of their nation's geography. Without a correct understanding of their country, the freedom achieved in the Revolution was at risk.[6]

Nonetheless, despite concerns over British books denigrating the colonies, Morse's textbooks took after the geodeterminism in the geographic writings of, for example, Ptolemy, Adam Smith, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau that used local climate zones as determining factors of race and culture. Like these writers, Morse placed textual descriptions of the characteristics and manners of populations next to physical descriptions of the land. Morse also used information from previously published geographies. For example, in the Advertisement to Part II of the *Universal Geography*, Morse claimed to have incorporated a number of existing geographies, from *Guthrie's Geographical Grammar* to *Zimmerman's Political Survey*. To these texts, he declared he made omissions and additions, which he deemed "improvements." Thus, though Morse produced American texts, he continued the geodeterministic European understanding of geography and even used information from European writers in his work.[7]

---

[6] Morse, preface to *Universal Geography*. Morse was also responding to writers, such as the Comte de Buffon, who argued that nature on the American continent was inferior to that of Europe.

[7] Morse, advertisement to *The American Universal Geography*; Brückner, "Lessons in Geography: Maps, Spellers, and Other Grammars of Nationalism in the Early Republic," *American Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (1999), 332; Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 33-4; Arnold, "Description of a Content Analysis," 15, 123; Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," 161-6. Morse was part of a larger phenomenon of early American writers who copied, without permission, British and European texts. Not only did he draw on European writers, he also used the works of fellow Americans, such as Thomas Hutchins and Thomas Jefferson.

Morse published his first textbook, *Geography made Easy*, in 1784, between graduating from Yale and beginning his ministerial career at the First Church in Charlestown. *Geography made Easy* met immediate success. Morse wrote to his father, "'I have sold between 3 & 400 [copies] within 3 weeks.'" Inspired by this success, Morse set out to write a more advanced volume, *American Geography*, which he published in 1789 and followed with *American Universal Geography* in 1793. By the 1795 publication of *Elements of Geography* there was a series of textbooks for all ages (refer to Table 1). While the geographies for older audiences (*American Geography* and *Universal Geography*) were encyclopedic in nature, the geographies for younger audiences (*Elements of Geography* and the *Catechism*) were in the catechetical style. As many textbook writers were also ministers like Morse this style was fashionable in the late eighteenth century and used by authors to imbue their lessons of geography, reading, and writing with a moral religious education. *Geography made Easy* sat between these two groups of texts: while it contained descriptive passages, these passages were more concise and easy to read than the passages found in the *American Geography* and the *Universal Geography*.[8]

Each of Morse's geographies went through multiple editions until the 1820s and the *Universal Geography* and *Geography made Easy* have been found in early republican libraries and also as part of school curricula. The geographies were the third most popular books in both rural and urban areas of the northern United States following the Bible and Noah Webster's spelling books and later deemed the "first financially rewarding educational publications." Though educators in the south often refused to use northern produced textbooks because they preached a glorified picture of New England,

[8] Morse to his father, New Haven, 8 January 1785, YU, in Brown, "Geographies of Jedidiah Morse."

records indicate that a Methodist school in Harrisonburg, Virginia used Morse's geographies in the early nineteenth century. The geographies were also published in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh, further attesting to their success. Nonetheless, Morse's readers hailed predominantly from New England, a reminder that the discussion of citizenship and nationalism in this paper is limited to the northern United States. Not only does publication history demonstrate the popularity of Morse's geographies, using student diaries and school records, Martin Brückner, Mary Kelley, and Jacqueline S. Reinier have also revealed that geography was more than a print phenomenon. It was placed alongside reading and writing in early American education and played a significant role in student life.[9]

**"Calculated for their juvenile capacities"**

By creating a series of textbooks based on age Morse echoed the greater national, and international, discussion of education, reason, and childhood rooted in the Enlightenment's emphasis on individual autonomy. Growing out of the seventeenth-century political thought of John Locke and Hugo Grotius that argued government was founded on a social contract in which autonomous men consented to it, educational theory shifted to emphasize parental responsibility, rather than paternal power, in the eighteenth century. Jean-Jacques Rousseau built on this foundation, arguing that in order to prepare children to be responsible citizens, mothers and fathers had to guide malleable

[9] Refer to Table 1 for publication years. For the resonance of Morse's geographies see Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," 214-217; Brückner, "Lessons in Geography," 325-6; Preston E. James, "The Significance of Geography in American Education," *Journal of Geography* 68 (November 1969), 474-5 in Knight, "Early Case of Opposition," (quote 425); William J. Gilmore, *Reading Becomes a Necessity of Life: Material and Cultural Life in Rural New England*, 1780-1835, 64 in Brückner, "Lessons in Geography," 320; John W. Wayland, *A History of Rockingham Country, Virginia* (Dayton, Va., 1912), 287, in Knight, "Early Case of Opposition," 264. For student diaries and school records see Brückner, *Geographic Revolution in Early America*, 320; Brückner, "Lessons in Geography," 320; Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006), 36, 166; Jacqueline S. Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 105-7.

children through a process of education that would cultivate reason—as the child developed their ability to reason, the parent could relax their authoritative control. While the development of reason was important for young girls since it prepared them to be future wives and mothers, for young boys (more specifically, for white boys of higher classes) it meant a graduation from passive to active citizen.[10]

While before the Revolution most schooling focused on religious and moral training and was done in the home, after independence emphasis was placed on the need to supplement familial education with a formal education through institutions. Fearing the fallible nature of government, the founders saw a formal system of enlightened education grounded in the belief that authority originated in the autonomy of the individual as a way to ensure the achievement of the Revolution passed down to the next generation—through education students would develop into rational citizens able to discern the rights and needs of the country. American leaders, notably Noah Webster, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Benjamin Rush, argued that a system of formal public schools would help diminish regional divide and foster national bonds among the nation's future republican citizens. Morse clearly agreed with these early leaders when he wrote, "Before the Revolution…our youth were educated as the subjects of the British king, not as the citizens of a free and independent republic."[11]

---

[10] Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York, 2007), 60; Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 2-18.

[11] Morse, preface to *The Universal Geography*. Significantly, Morse repeated a similar line in the *American Geography, Universal Geography*, and *Geography made Easy*. For information on education see Maris A. Vinovskis, "Family and Schooling in Colonial and Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of Family History* 12, nos. 1-3 (1987), 31; Arnold, "Description of a Content Analysis," 26-7; Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 102-3, x; Lorraine Smith Pangle and Thomas L. Pangle, *The Learning of Liberty: The Educational Ideas of the American Founders* (Lawrence, KS., 1993), 4-5, 75, 91-2; Michael Zuckerman, "Rousseau, The Enlightenment and early American education," *European Journal of Developmental Psychology* 19 (November 2012), 18-31.

As Enlightenment thought raised females to having active roles in the family, as the educators of children and affectionate companions to their husbands, girls too were included in early visions for a liberal education system. Female reason, however, was not seen as equal to male reason. Thus, though Enlightenment thought emphasized the equality of all men as a fundamental political right, it did not extend this equality to all people. Schooling became a way to prepare boys as future citizens, and to prepare girls as future republican mothers, equipped to influence their husbands and children. Geography, in particular, was deemed an important subject for girls to study. Notably, Morse wrote his first publication to "'accommodate a school of young ladies in New Haven'" he was teaching and explicitly stated in the preface of *Geography made Easy* that the book was intended for "our youth of both sexes." Though Morse deemed geography essential to the education of females, the reality of Morse's geographies was that his discussion of citizenship only applied to his male readers.[12]

[12] Morse to Christoph Ebeling, Charlestown, 27 May 1794, YU and Morse to William Livingston, New Haven, 26 October 1787, Livingston Papers, MHS in Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," 153; Morse, *Geography made Easy*, iv; Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak*, 49.

The belief that knowledge of geography, history, writing, and reading would uphold the nation's republicanism permeated the early United States. Due to the inability of state governments to fund a tax supported public school system and the largely rural nature of American society an organized system of public education did not exist until the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, enrollment and the establishment of schools rapidly increased in the second half of the eighteenth century. The northern United States in particular experienced an increase in the institutionalization of education as state governments encouraged towns to establish academies. Emerging as the "primary educational innovation" in the new Republic, academies served as the mediating institutions between town schools and colleges. Significantly, as the diary of Nahum Jones, a New England schoolteacher who recommended Jedidiah Morse's geography to his students indicates, northern academies offered Morse's *American Geography* to students. While education flourished in the northern United States, the south lagged behind the North in schooling and literacy well into the nineteenth century. [13]

Q. How many United States are there, and what are their capital towns?

A. Fifteen, which are,

| *States.* | *Capitals.* |
|---|---|
| New-Hampſhire | Portſmouth. |
| Maſſachuſetts | Boſton. |
| Rhode-Iſland | Newport. |
| Connecticut | New-haven. |
| Vermont | Bennington. |
| New-York | New-York. |
| New-Jerſey | Trenton. |
| Pennſylvania | Philadelphia. |
| Delaware | Dover. |
| Maryland | Annapolis. |
| Virginia | Richmond. |
| Kentucky | Lexington. |
| North-Carolina | Edenton. |
| South-Carolina | Charleſton. |
| Georgia | Auguſta |

**Figure 1: *Catechism*, 17. Morse used a relative listing of the United States North to South throughout his geographies. In the more advanced geographies he often placed them in tables along with statistical information.**

[13] For information on the growth of education in the eighteenth century see Margaret W. Masson, "Pessimism Surpassed: New Colleges as Bastions against Barbarism in Colonial America," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 8 (1979): 69-86; Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 102-124; J.M. Opal, "Exciting Emulation: Academies and the Transformation of the Rural North, 1780s-1820s," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (September 2004), 448, 450 (quote); Nahum Jones, "Diaries," AMs, Vol. 1 in Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 105. Opal indicates that the academies' location in village centers (and thus print centers) enabled them to offer their students Morse's *American Geography*. Much of his evidence comes from Leicester Academy and Marblehead Academy, both in Massachusetts. For information on southern schools see Vinovskis, "Family and Schooling," 24-5. Although there were attempts to establish schools in the South, population dispersion and the lack of local financial support inhibited growth of educational institutions.

As scholar Martin Brückner has shown, geography education in particular experienced rapid growth in the eighteenth century. Placed within the larger and "undifferentiated field of literature" geography textbooks were used both at home and in schools to teach the growing population how to read. While continuing the basic British approach to literary and geographic instruction both Noah Webster and Jedidiah Morse used America's geography to depart from and directly challenge common British textbooks, such as *Guthrie's Geographical Grammar* and Thomas Dilworth's *A New Guide to the English Language*. For example, though the majority of Webster's first *Grammatical Institute* paralleled Dilworth's work, Webster replaced Dilworth's section that rehearsed English towns and counties with names of places in the thirteen states. By ordering them top to bottom on the page Webster not only encouraged a standardization of American pronunciation but also visually reinforced the country's geography. The practice of listing place names in geographic order continued into Morse's geography textbooks, from the *Catechism* to the *American Universal Geography* (see Figure 1). By continuing Webster's practice of "word maps" Morse furthered the correlation between alphabetic and cartographic literacy.[14]

Morse made the connection between literacy and geography education explicit in his geography textbooks. The relationship is most clear in the geographies for Morse's younger students. For his readers eight to fourteen years old Morse wrote that he hoped to gratify his readers' curiosities "at the same time that they are making progress in the

[14] Brückner, "Lessons in Geography," 4, 320-2 (quote 320); Bingham, *Catechism*, 17; Schulten, *Mapping the Nation*, 18. History as a subject matter did not develop until the eighteenth century. Thus history and geography were studied together in early America. This is obvious in Morse's geographies, which, for example, include the history of the discovery of America. Before the widespread use of Morse's geographies in 1795, Webster included a brief geography lesson in his publications. See Pangle, *Learning of Liberty*, 139.

art of reading, and in the science of Geography." Likewise, in *Geography made Easy*, the textbook for slightly older audiences, he stated to have "endeavoured to accommodate [the textbook] to the use of schools as a reading book, that our youth of both sexes, at the same time that they are learning to read, might imbibe an acquaintance with their country, and an attachment to its interests." And in *American Universal Geography* Morse said that to keep importing the country's geographic knowledge from Britain would be a "disgraceful blot upon our literary and national character." Through these examples it is clear that Morse saw geography education, literacy, and the construction of a national character as one subject to be pursued by Americans: it was important for Morse's young readers while they went through their process of education and one that helped them graduate from child to rational adult. It was especially important for Morse's older readers since it helped form the national character.[15]

Due to the strong connection between literary training and geography education, American geography textbooks departed from their European counterparts that favored visual explanation. By favoring textual description instead, American geography textbooks, specifically those of Morse, became a distinct literary genre used to promote a national character type. As Brückner explains, "Geography books naturalized the idea of national character precisely by their strategic merger of graphic symbols (national map), verbal representation (encyclopedic delineation of the nation-state), and geographical personification (types)." Importantly, when written in geography textbooks these descriptions became shrouded in an "authoritative mantle of scientific objectivity." Through long descriptive passages starting with America, moving to the United States,

[15] Morse, *Elements of Geography*, vi; *Geography made Easy*, iv; preface to *Universal Geography*.

and then on to the individual states Morse created settings and characters for readers in the early Republic who were grappling with their local and national identities.[16]

Morse departed from his European counterparts in another important way: he restructured the organization of his textbooks and in doing so set the tone for American geographies well into the nineteenth century. Though following the two-part organization of traditional geography textbooks, North America came first in Morse's geographies, followed by South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. In restructuring his geographies, Morse "imposed a New World order" and presented his readers with an "overtly nationalist and competitive perspective." The fictional constructions of these geographies aided their readers through a self-identification process that transcended regional borders and encouraged them to identify with the nation as a whole. However, the national and regional identities Morse presented to his readers depended on their age.[17]

The imagining of a national character had important implications for Morse's child readers. As Enlightenment thought rooted political legitimacy in experience and understanding, children were designated as a group incapable of reason. The child did not graduate from subjecthood (under the parent) to adulthood until developing, through education, the ability to reason. Nonetheless, as Courtney Weikle-Mills argues there was "a divergence between the historical-legal and the literary consequences of liberal-democratic theory." Due to the Constitution's ambiguity on requirements for citizenship it was unclear as to whether children's political rights began at birth or at the age of

[16] Brückner, *Geographic Revolution in Early America* 172, 167, 164. Morse continued these descriptive passages when he described countries and territories outside of the United States.
[17] Brückner, *Geographic Revolution in Early America,* 163-4. Susan Schulten argues, "Historical maps and atlases were not used to *explain* geographical problems, but rather to cultivate a shared identity by offering tangible evidence of the nation's evolution over time." See *Mapping the Nation*, 12.

consent. Thus, children became powerful metaphors in order to justify the need for certain groups' limited rights (for example, women and slaves). By encouraging an "imagined citizenship" that removed children from the group of current citizens but emphasized their importance as future citizens, early American texts invited those who could not directly participate in politics to envision themselves as part of the nation. Importantly, while Morse's male readers would become future citizens, his female readers would never leave the realm of "imaginary citizenship"—citizens, who lacked political rights, yet were imagined as part of the nation.[18]

Print culture not only inspired a "textual legitimacy" that allowed readers who lacked political rights to identify as citizens of the nation, but it also encouraged an "emotional legitimacy" by encouraging readers to imagine that the law and nation were objects of affection. This "emotional legitimacy" was especially prevalent in texts addressed to child readers. Texts led children through a process of identification, in which they learned to translate the love they had for their parent, to a love for the text and author, to a love of the country and government. Instilling this affection at an early age became a supplement to the social contract, to "shore up ideologies of citizenship as consensual and free of subjection, since imagining laws as affectionate makes it desirable (and also reasonable) to consent to them." By developing this "affectionate citizenship" early texts guided their readers to imagine that the law originated from their own desire to love and consent to the government.[19]

---

[18] Holly Brewer, *By Birth or Consent: Children, Law, and the Anglo-American Revolution in Authority* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2005), 348; Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens*, 14 (quote), 4; Schwebel, "Childhood Studies Meets Early America," 143. I borrow the term and concept of "imaginary citizenship" from Courtney Weikle-Mills' *Imaginary Citizens*.

[19] In *Imaginary Citizens* Weikle-Mills builds off of Michael Warner's work on print culture in the early Republic and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. I borrow the term "affectionate citizenship" from her work. While Weikle-Mills examines an array of texts written for children she does not examine

In Morse's the *American Geography* and the *Universal Geography* geographic knowledge and citizenship were intrinsically linked. However, a concrete correlation between geography and citizenship was replaced with a more "affectionate citizenship" in Morse's texts for younger audiences. Crucially, *Geography made Easy* was intended to be read "by both sexes" in schools, as well as by "the cottage fire side" and *Elements of Geography* to be useful in "Private Families" and by its cheapness "diffuse useful knowledge extensively among all classes of people, the poor as well as the rich." Thus, the readership of these texts extended beyond schoolchildren. By looking at Morse's language and by comparing the material included and excluded in his descriptions of 'Political Geography' it becomes clear that Morse sought to cultivate "affectionate citizenship" through his geographies written for younger audiences and intended to be read by those who lacked political rights (in the home, where women dominated, and regardless of the reader's wealth or the amount of property they owned).[20]

In Morse's geographies knowledge of one's country played a direct role in fostering virtuous citizens: those who worked hard, were devoutly Christian, and overlooked self-interest for the common good. By looking at the prefaces of Morse's textbooks it becomes clear that Morse viewed geographic knowledge as an important aspect of citizenship, especially for the country's youth. In the *American Geography* Morse wrote, "[this geography] is calculated early to impress the minds of American

---

textbooks. See Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens* 64-6, 20 (quote), 75. Jacqueline S. Reinier makes similar arguments in *From Virtue to Character*. She argues, "In post-Revolutionary decades, as printers, physicians, clergymen, and educators sought to shape colonial regional cultures into a national polity, they turned to enlightened child-rearing to implement republican goals. If virtue was essential for citizenship, they argued, then enlightened methods and materials could be utilized to mold children they perceived as malleable into future citizens and citizens' wives" (x). Rather than "affectionate citizenship," Reinier uses "enlightened child-rearing" to describe this phenomenon.

[20] Morse, *Geography made Easy,* iv; *Elements of Geography*, vi. When Morse lists the series of geography textbooks in *Elements of Geography* in 1795 he does state that *The American Universal Geography* is intended for use in "private families" (vii). However, this intention does not appear in the original text.

Youth with an idea of the superior importance of their own country." Without school books, "adapted to the genius of our republican government," Morse thought the country ran "the hazard of having our children imbibe from [school books] the monarchical ideas, and national prejudices of the English." In these excerpts, especially through his use of "impress" and "imbibe," it is clear that Morse saw the minds of his students as easily influenced (fitting squarely in the camp of early writers who echoed Locke's belief in the importance of shaping malleable children). Without a proper knowledge based in republican values, monarchical political ideologies could threaten the country and, more importantly, the impressionable minds of its youth who were developing their capacities to reason.[21]

Nonetheless, citizenship was different for each audience. While it was important for Morse's older audiences to understand geography to better themselves as current citizens, an explicit extension of citizenship that included his younger readers was missing from *Geography made Easy* and *Elements of Geography*. In these textbooks for younger readers, geography was seen as a virtuous endeavor to improve the minds of the readers in order to prepare them as *future* citizens.

For his oldest readers, those above fifteen, Morse wrote, "The Author's principal reason for deviating from his original plan of confining his work chiefly to the United States of America [in the *American Geography*], was that he might furnish his fellow citizens, especially the youth of his country, with a general system of Geography." While Morse highlighted his concern for the impressionability of the nation's youth in this line he, more significantly, referred to his readers as "fellow citizens." Furthermore, Morse included the full text of the Constitution only in the *Universal Geography*, the geography

[21] Morse, preface to *American Geography*; preface to *Universal Geography*.

for Morse's oldest students, suggesting that it was most applicable to these readers. Geography textbooks written in America would furnish Morse's oldest readers with the appropriate material to be well-informed *current* citizens.[22]

In *Geography made Easy* and *Elements of Geography* Morse did not refer to his readers as "fellow citizens" nor include the Constitution. Morse began *Geography made Easy*, "No national government holds out to its subjects so many alluring motives to obtain an accurate knowledge of their own country, and of its various interests, as that of United America." In contrast to the previous textbook, Morse used "subjects" in this instance to refer to his readers, suggesting that the child reader had not graduated from subjecthood to citizenship like older citizens who made this transition from being the subjects of the British crown to American citizens after the Revolution. He continued to list what he deemed the positive aspects of the American government, from the freedom of elections to duties of public office that were not confined to one class of men, and asserted that it was "wise and prudent" to teach "our youth in the knowledge of these things, and thus to form their minds upon republican principles, and prepare them for future usefulness and honour." In this geography not only was importance placed on "republican principles," rather than citizenship itself, but also for the student's "future usefulness," rather than immediate action. Likewise, an explicit mention of geography's role in shaping republican citizenship was missing from *Elements of Geography*. Instead, emphasis was put on "[t]he continuance and security of true Religion, and of civil Liberty." Here, Morse again stressed that his young readers were the future of the country, yet importance is placed on two of the foundations of republican virtue, rather than citizenship itself. For his students from eleven to fifteen and eight to fourteen,

[22] Morse, preface to *Universal Geography*.

Morse unpacked the concept of citizenship—breaking it down to republican principles and then to religion and civil liberty. Consequently, Morse appeared to remove his child reader from the status of citizen.[23]

Reason, or an ability to understand the material, permeated throughout *Geography made Easy* and *Elements of Geography*, suggesting a similar corollary between a child's inability to reason as justification for not being able to participate in politics. Morse wrote in *Geography made Easy*, "There is no science better adapted to the capacities of youth, and more apt to captivate their attention, than Geography." Similar language appeared in *Elements of Geography*: Morse hoped that he comprised in the book "as much information as [was] consistent with perspicuity to the minds of children" and rendered "the acquisition of useful knowledge still more easy to children." In these excerpts Morse's concern for his material being adequate for his younger audience is clear. Morse asserted that before *Elements of Geography*, books were "illy [*sic*] adapted, as to the subjects, for the improvement of the youthful understanding." Morse placed importance on the child's ability to understand the material presented to them and saw the learning of geography as central for the improvement of the child's ability to understand, an important characteristic of politically active citizens.[24]

Morse's emphasis on age throughout *Elements of Geography* becomes significant in understanding his geographies as a series of textbooks. In *Elements of Geography* Morse separated the geographic knowledge into three categories: 'Astronomical Geography', 'Physical, or 'Natural Geography'', and 'Political Geography'. Notably, though in the section considering 'Astronomical Geography' Morse told his readers,

[23] Morse, *Geography made Easy*, [iii].
[24] Morse, *Geography made Easy*, n.b.; *Elements of Geography*, iv.

"When you are older and better capable of understanding [the material], you shall have further instruction in this sublime science" and acknowledged, "you may not be able to understand all parts of [the material]," he did not refer his readers to the more advanced geographies as he did in the following two sections. Moreover, as 'Astronomical Geography' dominated the *Catechism*, it appears that this division of the science was deemed most appropriate for the youngest audiences. As Morse's readers advanced, the material on 'Natural Geography' and 'Political Geography' significantly outweighed the material on 'Astronomical Geography'.[25]

While in the section on 'Natural Geography' Morse briefly referred his readers to the *American Universal Geography* for a more complete description of the vegetable kingdom when "you [the reader] are old enough to read these books," age was a prominent focus in the section on 'Political Geography'. Unlike the other textbooks, *Elements of Geography* was written in the form of a conversation between a pupil and master. While the conversation between the two was continuous throughout the master's description of 'Astronomical Geography' and 'Natural Geography' before beginning their discussion of 'Political Geography' the master bid the pupil goodnight. The next day the master addressed the pupil, "Good morning to you, my Pupil. I hope you have come with a clear head." By clumping the previous divisions of geography into one and hoping that the pupil had a "clear head" to begin their study of 'Political Geography', Morse suggested that this geographic division was the most difficult to understand. This was supported when Morse, as the master, continued:

[25] Morse, *Elements of Geography*, 23-4, 30.

> You will find a short account of most of these things, in *Geography made Easy*, and a much larger and more complete account of them, in *The American Universal Geography*, to which I refer you. Here I shall give you only a sketch of those parts which are adapted to your age, and which will enable you to read the other books I have mentioned to more advantage.

Though a possible marketing ploy, by explicitly referring his reader to the more advanced geographies Morse suggested the importance of this geographic division and the development of its understanding from an early age. Referring to the other geographies was a recurring theme throughout this section. A foundational understanding of 'Political Geography' given in *Elements of Geography* was important as the student progressed to the more advanced geographies and became closer to graduating from an "imagined citizen" to an actual citizen.[26]

While Morse's other geographies were not divided into subsections, 'Political Geography' which Morse defined as "contemplate[ing] the earth as inhabited by men; and as divided for their accommodation and convenience, as to government, commerce, and other purposes, into Empires, Kingdoms, States, and various subdivisions" dominated the texts. In these sections Morse juxtaposed topographical descriptions with descriptions of the characteristics of the inhabitants of an area. The inclusions and exclusions Morse made in the sections that fall under the category of 'Political Geography' provide the most telling information for an understanding of the relationship between childhood, citizenship, and geography in the early Republic.[27]

[26] Morse, *Elements of Geography*, 52-53.
[27] Morse not only applied geodetermined characteristics to the United States, but also to Europe, Africa, South America, and Asia.

**"I shall love it more than I ever did before"**

While an overt nationalistic, patriotic tone was prevalent throughout each of the geographies, it became shrouded in language of love and affection in the textbooks written for younger readers. By first examining Morse's intention in writing the geographies and then comparing the descriptions of the 'Political Geography' of the United States in each of the textbooks it becomes clear that Morse used geography in order to encourage his younger readers to first develop affection for him as an author and then, consequently, for the government and country as a whole.

In *Geography made Easy* and *Elements of Geography* the need to study geography was rooted in a desire to please the "curiosities" of Morse's younger readers. In *Geography made Easy* Morse addressed them, "the Young Masters and Misses Throughout the United States" and told them that his geography was supposed to be both "Useful and Entertaining." Useful in the sense that it would educate its readers on the geography of their new nation and entertaining in that it would satisfy their curiosities. Morse continued, "An acquaintance with [Geography]….satisfies that pertinent curiosity, which is the predominating feature of the youthful mind." Morse carried this idea over to *Elements of Geography*, the geography for his slightly younger readers, claiming that the textbook had been adapted as "Entertainment for Young People" and asserting again, "Curiosity is the most prominent feature in the youthful mind." By purposing these geographies to please the young reader's "curiosities" Morse suggested that the readers needed guidance. Furthermore, Morse took on a playful tone in these introductions by encouraging their use for entertainment. In doing so, Morse removed himself as an authoritative teacher and positioned himself as an affectionate guide. With the goal to

entertain the curiosities of young readers Morse's textbooks fell into the category of children's books that worked to guide readers from affectionate children to affectionate citizens.[28]

Morse also used a language of love and affection rooted in the reader's happiness to encourage his readers to develop a love for him as an author. He ended his Advertisement to *Geography made Easy*, "That the labours of the author may be a benefit to the youth of that country which he loves, and which he has sedulously explored, is his most ardent wish" and dedicated the textbook "With the warmest Wishes For [the Young Masters and Misses] Early Improvement In every thing that shall make them truly happy." By deeming himself the students' "humble servant" Morse debased himself to his student, encouraging them to see him as a loving figure rather than an authoritative voice in the text. He also provided himself as an example as he hoped he could instill in his readers the same love he had for his country. Morse continued this language in *Elements of Geography*: "Presuming, my dear Pupil, that you have an inclination to obtain a knowledge of the entertaining and useful science of Geography…I shall devote a few hours to the pleasant talk of instructing you." Not only did Morse root the study of geography in the reader's happiness, but he also extended it to the reader's own inclination. Like the founders who thought education rooted in the autonomy of the individual would produce citizens capable of determining the needs of the country and willing to consent to the government, Morse encouraged his reader to imagine the study of geography stemming from his or her own desire to learn about the subject. Thus Morse instilled in his young readers a foundational understanding of geography rooted in

[28] Morse, *Geography made Easy*, n.b., [iii]; *Elements of Geography*, iv; Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens*, 75.

their own consent to learn about the subject. For Morse's younger audience, whose importance as future citizens, rather than current political actors, was essential, Morse nurtured an affectionate relationship between himself and his readers that was supposed to transform the child reader into an affectionate citizen of the country.[29]

Morse's portrayal of the United States further supported this affectionate relationship. He painted the United States as a complete geographic space for his youngest readers and diminished their exposure to regional differences. Through these techniques Morse made it easier for his young readers to identify with the country as a whole and develop a natural bond of loyalty and affection to the government. Each of Morse's geographies started with an account of the United States and then moved into narratives of the individual states. Following many geodeterministic writings of the eighteenth century, Morse saw the hot, damp climate of the south as threatening to people's moral virtue and favored the cool, dry climate of the north. For example, Morse wrote in the *Universal Geography*, "New England has a very healthful climate, as is evidence by the longevity of the inhabitants." He then juxtaposed New England's favorable climate with a description of New Englanders as "generally tall, stout, and well built. Their education, laws and situation, serve to inspire them with high notions of liberty." Likewise, he compared the southern climate to the prominence of slavery and stated, "The influence of slavery has produced a very distinguishing feature in the general character of the inhabitants." These distinctions, however, are less pronounced in *Geography made Easy* and even more diminished in *Elements of Geography*.[30]

[29] Morse, advertisement to *Geography made Easy*; *Elements of Geography*, 13
[30] Morse, *Universal Geography*, 310, 314, 519.

In the *Universal Geography* and *Geography made Easy* Morse divided the country into three sections: New England, the Middle States, and the Southern States. After his description of the United States as a whole, Morse moved to describe New England. He started with an overview of the region and then went through the individual states, giving detailed descriptions of the state's population and their characteristics, topography, agriculture, animals, etc. Morse proceeded down the United States in this way, starting with descriptions of the regions as a whole and then moving to the respective states. Morse reversed this process for his young readers in *Elements of Geography*. His young readers were first presented with a thick description of the United States as a whole. Then, they continued to descriptions of the individual states that were significantly less in depth. While part of his reasoning was probably to accommodate the material to his readers' age, the technique Morse chose to present his readers with this information is telling. Rather than dividing the United States into three regions and then proceeding through them as if they had distinct boundaries, Morse did not divide his descriptions of the states into three regional categories in *Elements of Geography*. Instead, he briefly introduced the three regions in his description of the United States as a whole and then seamlessly proceeded through each state one after another. In doing so Morse reduced regional divides and presented his readers with a more coherent picture of the United States. More importantly, Morse's commentary on slavery as a distinguishing feature of the south was missing from this geography for students between eight and fourteen except for one line, "Here [in the southern states] live a principal part of the poor slaves," and New England was not as idealized. By erasing the harsh divisions between

the three regions and reducing regional character types, Morse presented a picture of the United States as a more unified country for his younger readers.[31]

Looking at the section "Characters and Manners" of the United States in the *Universal Geography* helps explain Morse's decision to present the country as a more cohesive whole. In this section Morse's description of Americans suggested current disunity but promised future coherence. Morse began the section, "Federal Americans, collec[tively] together from various countries, of different habits, formed [from] governments, have yet to form their national character." He clarified, however: "or we may rather say, it is in a forming state. They have not existed as a nation long enough for us to form an idea of what will be, in its maturity, its prominent features." Thus Morse introduced his readers to their fellow citizens by acknowledging their fundamental differences, yet clarified that it was only because the nation was young that the national character had yet to be formed. Morse concluded the section on a similar yet more emphatic note: "The time, however, is anticipated, when all improper distinctions shall be abolished; and when the language, manners, customs, political, and religious sentiments of the mixed mass of people who inhabit the United States, shall have become so assimilated, as that all nominal distinctions shall be lost in the general and honourable name of AMERICANS." Significantly, Morse cited the differences he acknowledged as separating the people of the United States at the beginning of the section in this last declaration. He passionately alleged that these differences would be "abolished" and that the people would be "assimilated" under one name: Americans.[32]

[31] Morse, *Elements of Geography*, 87.
[32] Morse, *Universal Geography*, 209, 212.

While he shortened the section "Characters and Manners" from four pages in *Universal Geography* to just one page in *Geography made Easy* it is significant that it was these exact excerpts about future unity that Morse decided to include. What Morse left out is even more telling. Between Morse's declarative hope for the future national character at the beginning and end of this section was a poignant commentary on Federal Americans' main fault: slavery. Throughout a page and a half Morse denounced slavery, explaining that it "renders labour, among the whip not only unfashionable, but disreputable" and that its "influence on manners and morals is equally pernicious." Accordingly, his description of the "Characters and Manners" of the United States had two functions: to demonstrate hope for the future national character of the country and to expound on slavery as a regional difference that weakened the country and needed to be abolished. As a united national character would come to depend on Morse's young readers, the future citizens and future republican wives and mothers, Morse strategically excluded his discussion of slavery.[33]

Morse made other important changes between the geographies in his discussion of the "Spanish Dominions in N. America." He wrote for his oldest readers in the *Universal Geography*: "It has been supposed by some that all settlers who go beyond the Mississippi, will be forever lost to the United States." He quickly rejected this notion claiming that the emigrants beyond the Mississippi were "citizens of the United States" who cherished the "manners and customs, their habits of government, religion and education" that they brought with them. Morse declared, "they will be Americans in fact,

[33] Morse, *Universal Geography*, 210. This language is also found in the 1796 edition of the *Universal Geography*. The similarity demonstrates that the difference in publication years between the *Universal Geography* (1793), *Geography made Easy* (1794), and *Elements of Geography* (1795) did not significantly influence how Morse treated this particular material.

though nominally the subjects of Spain." Though Morse did not equate his younger readers as fellow citizens, he extended citizenship to emigrants beyond the borders of the United States. Interestingly, Morse excluded this language in *Geography made Easy* and the description of these territories was limited to the area's resources in *Elements of Geography*. This exclusion reinforced Morse's aversion to extending citizenship to his young readers.[34]

Furthermore, in both the *Universal Geography* and *Geography made Easy* Morse wrote, "we cannot but anticipate the period as not far distant, when the *American Empire* will comprehend millions of souls west of the Mississippi. Judging upon probable grounds, the Mississippi was never designed as the western boundary of the American empire." In these passages Morse promoted an overt nationalism and foreshadowed the nineteenth century belief in Manifest Destiny, that not only saw western expansion as inevitable, but also justified. Due to the widespread use of these texts in homes and schools it would not be reaching to say that these texts influenced nineteenth-century figures such as John L. O'Sullivan or John Quincy Adams. Though an important aspect of the older geographies, this distinct expansionist language was missing from *Elements of Geography* suggesting that Morse placed importance on developing a national character based on the unity of the nation that was grounded in an enclosed geographic space for his youngest readers, the future citizens.[35]

In contrast to both *Universal Geography* and *Geography made Easy* that acknowledged the disunity of the current United States, *Elements of Geography* had no such language. Instead, Morse portrayed the United States as a unified whole and used

[34] Morse, *Universal Geography*, 630.
[35] Morse, *Universal Geography*, 630 and *Geography made Easy*, 263.

its geographic space as its foundation. Morse began the section 'Political Geography' describing the "Grand Political Divisions of the Earth," designating, "*Europe* is the smallest, but the most improved and civilized; *Africa* the most barbarous, and the least known; *Asia* the wealthiest, the most anciently inhabited, and the theatre of the most interesting events; *America* the largest, the grandest, as to its mountains and rivers, the least populous and wealthy, and the last explored and inhabited." In contrast to the other continents, Morse equated the American continent's greatness to its geographic landscape. Morse continued to use geography in his description of the United States. While Morse provided a map at the beginning of his sections describing the United States in each of his geographies, in *Elements of Geography* he juxtaposed this map with an anthropomorphic description of the United States. In the textual description Morse equated the shape of the country with "the *trunk* of a broad shouldered man, with the stumps of his arms a little elevated and extended." Morse moved down the body: "The curved Canada line forms the top part of the trunk, and the N.W. corner of the N. Western Territory, and the District of Maine are the two elevated stumps of the arms…The Southern States constitute the waist of this trunk…The breadth of the United States, from N. to S. forming the length of the *Trunk*." Morse used the trunk of a man as a metaphor for the body of a citizen and in doing so encouraged his readers to see themselves as part of a collective whole. Significantly, Morse chose the trunk of a *man*, thus targeting his male readers and excluding his female readers. Morse noted that the exercise of juxtaposing this imagination of the anthropomorphic map of the United States next to the actual map provided in the geography was "the first thing for a child to obtain."[36]

[36] Morse, *Elements of Geography*, 54, 74-5. By using the body of a man Morse mimicked the front piece of

Morse's explanation of the history of the United States in each of the geographies is also telling. In these descriptions, however, the telling part is not what Morse decided to exclude from his narrative in the *Universal Geography* but what he decided to include in *Elements of Geography*. Notably, the histories of the United States came before Morse's descriptions of the individual states. In *Elements of Geography* this description was given more attention than the states and in it Morse specifically contrasted the happiness of the citizens and affection they had for the United States government with the British government that had lost their affection. Morse explained, "By repeated acts of oppression, which commenced about the year 1765, and by turning a deaf ear to their petitions and remonstrances, Great-Britain, at length, lost the affections and confidence of her colonies, and a cruel and unnatural war commenced." While Morse condensed his long descriptions of the specific acts from the *Universal Geography* he pointedly added that the American subjects lost their affection for the British government. Morse then stated, "Under the administration of this [the current] government, the citizens of the United States have enjoyed a singular share of happiness and prosperity," in order to contrast the people's previous discontent with their current satisfaction.

Before leaving the United States as a whole and moving into the descriptions of the states the Master addressed the Pupil, "Thus my Pupil, I have given you a general view of your own country, which claims your *first*, and at your age, your *principal* attention. It is your duty to love your country, to respect your rulers, and to obey their laws." While the entire text of *Elements of Geography*, the geography for students between eight and fourteen years old, cultivated an affectionate citizenship in its young

---

Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* that presented the commonwealth in the form of a body made up of the smaller bodies of its citizens.

readers it was in these lines that it was most poignant. Though Morse nurtured a similar affectionate citizenship for his readers between eleven and fifteen, explicit language like this was not used. Most significantly, the Pupil responded to the Master, "I am truly delighted, Sir, with the account you have given of my country, and I am sure I shall love it more than I ever did before. I hope I shall always be disposed to respect and obey my rulers." Using the catechetical style more than just a pedagogical tool, Morse led his readers to virtually give consent to the government.[37]

By taking the age of Morse's intended audiences at face value this paper has intersected the fields of the history of education and childhood studies, nuancing previous arguments made about geography education, childhood, and citizenship in the early Republic. While scholars have convincingly argued that both children and geography played critical roles in the construction of an early national character, previous work has overlooked a relationship between the two. This paper demonstrates that Morse's geography textbooks targeted citizens who lacked political rights, inviting them to imagine themselves as part of the national whole. Though Morse closely tied geography to citizenship in all of the textbooks, Morse used an "affectionate citizenship" to appeal to his younger readers. By looking at Morse's explicit language and the inclusions and exclusions he made between the geographies we can see that Morse manipulated his portrayal of the United States to encourage his young readers to develop a love for their country and see their consent to laws as originating in their own desires. While this paper has focused on the immediate context of Morse's publications from 1784 to 1795, the popularity of the textbooks well into the nineteenth century suggests the resonance of

[37] Morse, *Elements of Geography*, 84-5. The Pupil's response mimics the "bursts of gratitude" Emile expressed for his tutor in Rousseau's work. See Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 16.

these issues: the unjust practice of slavery, the fluidity of the country's borders, and the political reality of the United States that claimed to originate in the consent of the people yet limited political rights for certain groups.

## Table 1: Jedidiah Morse's Geography Textbooks

| Textbook Name | Targeted Age Group | Years Published |
|---|---|---|
| *The American Geography; or a view of the present situation of the United States of America…* | Above 15 | 1789, 1792 (London and Dublin), 1794 (London), 1795 (Edinburgh) |
| *The American Universal Geography, or a view of the present state of all the empires, kingdoms, states and republics of the known world, and of the United States in particular…* | Above 15 | 1793, 1796, 1802, 1805, 1812, 1819 |
| *Geography made Easy, being a short, but comprehensible system of that very agreeable and useful science…* | Approximately 11-15 | 1784, 1790, 1791, 1794, 1796, 1798, 1804, 1806, 1807, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1816, 1818, 1819<br><br>*Geography made Easy* underwent three more editions under a different name until 1828. |
| *Elements of Geography; containing a concise and comprehensive view of that useful science…* | 8-14 | 1795, 1796, 1798, 180, 1804 |
| *An Astronomical and Geographical Catechism*<br><br>*It is important to note that Caleb Bingham wrote and S. Hall published the *Catechism.* Morse included it in the description of the series of textbooks. | 8 and under | 1795, 1796, 1798, 1800, 1803, 1805, 1808, 1810, 1813, 1815, 1816, 1819 |

**The textbooks are in descending order based on age. The publication information comes from Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," 214-7; and my own research of the *Catechism*. There are a few publication years missing for *Geography made Easy* and the *Catechism* since in 1819 *Geography made Easy* was in its twentieth edition and in 1819 the *Catechism* was in its fifteenth edition. The information on age comes from *Elements of Geography* (Boston, 1795), vii; "Student Life: A campus shared by the College, the Academy and the Charity School," Penn: University Archives and Records Center, accessed December 12, 2015, http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/features/1700s/studtlife.html; Brückner, *The Geographic Revolution in Early America*, 158; and Reinier, *From Virtue to Character*, 104-8. When Morse did not explicitly write the age of his intended audiences I estimated using school records and student diaries.**

## "A most confused feeling inside": Sexuality and American Girls Abroad in the Interwar Period

As fourteen-year-old Victoria Brown set sail for Europe in 1935 she sketched a picture in her diary. A girl, presumably herself, waves goodbye to the New York City skyline as she gazes at a circular buoy with the name of the ship that would carry her to Europe: "S.S. Champlain." Across the top of the page she wrote, "goodbye USA." Victoria's journey was not unique. Fifteen-year-old Clara Louise Schiefer, sixteen-year-olds Anna Bob Taylor and Rosalie Durrette Jones McLeod, and Elizabeth Daum, a girl likely in her teens, gave similar attention in their diaries to the day they left for Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. These girls recorded detailed accounts of their travel until they returned home weeks and sometimes months later, yet their experiences have yet to be studied.[38]

While scholarship on twentieth-century travel and travel writing exists, scholars overlook the travel of youths who went abroad in the interwar period before they entered college. Likewise, a rich scholarship on twentieth-century American youth culture exists and yet little work addresses the youth experience outside the country. When examined in light of this scholarship, the travel diaries of these five girls reveal that during their travel these girls challenged prevailing white, middle and upper-middle class gender and

[38] Victoria Brown Travel Diary of Europe, 1935, SC 00002, Special Collections, Swem Library, College of William and Mary, Aug. 16, Part I, pg. 65; Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, 1933, Mss. Acc. 2009.073 186, Special Collections, Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Anna Taylor Diary, 1929, Mss. Acc. 2011.569, Special Collections Swem Library, College of William and Mary; Rosalie D.J. McLeod Diary, 1937, Mss. 94 M22, Special Collections Swem Library, College of William and Mary; and Elizabeth Daum Diary, 1926, MS. 162 Box 1 c. 1, Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries Special Collection, Johns Hopkins University. While I am unsure of Elizabeth Daum's exact age it is clear in her writing that she identified herself as distinct from the adults she traveled with. She expressed identification with youths when she wrote, "There are 4 young people here so am having lots of fun." In the next entry, she distinguished herself from "older folks" (her aunt and uncle). She was not traveling with a collegiate group and thus fits into the group of youths I am studying. See Elizabeth Daum Diary, Aug. 19 and 20, 1926. It is important to note that people's writing often reflects what they thought they *should* think, rather than *what* they actually thought. The evidence presented in this paper is my interpretation of both things written explicitly in the girls' diaries and things I interpret as being implied.

sexual norms in the United States at this time. By interrogating moments when the girls wrote about alcohol, experimented with their clothing, encountered the opposite sex, and commented on gender norms it becomes clear that these journeys allowed the girls to explore their sexuality. The girls' attention to sexuality both on their voyages and once in Europe reveals that their understanding of their sexuality was not shaped solely by what they experienced within the United States but also by what they encountered beyond the country's borders.[39]

[39] For the purpose of this paper I am defining "sexuality" as "desires, relationships, acts, and identities concerned with sexual behavior." While this definition of sexuality comes from Anna Clark's *Desire: A History of European Sexuality* (New York, 2008) it is no less applicable to sexuality in the United States. Scholars who study sexuality in the United States also define and study it using these terms. Their definitions, however, are not as succinct. I found this definition to be the most appropriate to the girls studied in this paper. The scholarship on twentieth-century youth and girl culture already mentioned encompasses studies of sexuality. For additional scholarship on sexuality in the United States see John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago, 2012) and Sharon Ullman, *Sex Seen: The Emergence of Modern Sexuality in America* (Berkeley, 1977). The definition comes from Clark, *Desire*, 3.
The term "youth," rather than "teenage" or "adolescence," is used in this paper because "teenage" was not widely used until the 1940s and "adolescence" is the clinical term used to demarcate this stage of life. I also hope the term "youth" well help readers avoid imposing contemporary understandings of people in their teens to the historical actors studied in this paper. I use "girl" in order to study this group as distinct from women but it must be kept in mind that I am studying a particular moment of girlhood. Age, like gender and race, is an arbitrary category that is imbued with social meaning and understanding within a specific historical moment. See Steven Mintz, "Reflections on Age as a Category of Historical Analysis," *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1:1 (2008), 92-93. For scholarship on twentieth-century American youth culture see Beth Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore, 1988); Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York, 1997); Susan K. Cahn, *Sexual Reckonings: Southern Girls in a Troubling Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007); Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* (Oxford, 1977); Amanda H. Littauer, *Bad Girls: Young Women, Sex, and Rebellion before the Sixties* (Chapel Hill, 2015); Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture* (New York, 2007); and Kelly Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox: The Emergence of Teenage Girls' Culture* (New York, 2004).
This paper largely builds off of recent work on tourism by Brooke L. Blower and Nancy L. Green. See Blower, *Becoming Americans in Paris: Transatlantic Politics and Culture between the World Wars* (Oxford, 2011); and Nancy L. Green, *The Other Americans in Paris: Businessmen, Countesses, Wayward Youth, 1880-1941* (Chicago, 2014). By studying youth before they entered college this paper adds dimensions to this historiography. Beginning in 1923 with the establishment of Junior Year Abroad at the University of Delaware an increasing number of college students spent one year abroad as undergraduates. While Blower and Green, among others, study these collegiate groups, the experience of youths outside of these groups is understudied. See also, Harvey Levenstein, *Seductive Journey: American Tourists in France From Jefferson to the Jazz Age* (Chicago, 1998) and Mark Rennella and Whitney Walton, "Planned Serendipity: American Travelers and the Transatlantic Voyage in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 2 (2004).

A brief introduction to the girls shows that they went on their trips within vastly different travel arrangements. Elizabeth, who embarked for Europe in 1926, undertook the transatlantic voyage unaccompanied. She then toured Europe with a heterosexual married couple from her hometown and ended her tour staying with relatives outside of Paris. Anna Bob traveled with her mother and a tour group in 1929. Clara Louise visited Europe without her parents, instead traveling with a group of young students through the Columbia Friendship Tour in 1933. Victoria went abroad with her parents and younger sister, "Sisa," in 1935. And, finally, Rosalie toured numerous countries with her father through a travel agency in 1937.[40]

These heterosexual, white, middle to upper-middle-class American girls undertook an atypical experience for those their age by traveling abroad in the interwar period. Although the girls traveled both before and after the Depression and hailed from different places across the United States, the consistencies among their diaries suggest that neither the Depression nor where they came from vastly changed their travel experiences. What is noteworthy, however, is how removed the girls were from their

[40] As Elizabeth only recorded her experience abroad in her journal, we do not know where Elizabeth was from, but we do know that she visited Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and France. In contrast, Anna Bob and Clara Louise kept their journals throughout the entire year and thus provided rich information about their lives before, during, and after their trips. Anna Bob grew up with a single mother (while her father was not physically present, he financially supported the two) in Houston, Texas. She toured England, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Clara Louise, an only child from Rochester, New York, visited Germany and Switzerland. Like Elizabeth, Victoria and Rosalie only kept their journals while abroad yet provided more details in regards to their biographies. Victoria grew up in Burlingame, California. Her family visited France and then Italy to attend the international architecture conference in Rome. Rosalie who was from Richmond, Virginia underwent extensive travel, visiting countries throughout Europe (including Russia and Turkey) and also Israel and Egypt. I must acknowledge that the girls likely came to Europe having been exposed to differing cultural experiences with gender and sexual norms. Nonetheless, though the girls came from different backgrounds and traveled at different times, their diaries indicate that travel consistently offered each girl the opportunity to explore their sexuality. Furthermore, while much could be said about the political nature of these trips, this paper focuses on the girls' exploration of their sexuality within the specific context of sexuality in the United States at this time. This paper knowingly offers an often-simplified discussion of sexuality and politics in Europe, let alone the individual countries of Europe, and a one-sided view of the exchanges between the girls and the Europeans they met.

home environment and the level of surveillance they were under while they travelled affected how each girl explored her sexuality. In other words, whether they traveled with no, one, or both parents, deeply changed how they acted or, rather, at least what they wrote in their diaries.

When the girls left the shores of the United States to cross the Atlantic they joined a long tradition of Americans visiting Europe. Though originally reserved for a small group of elite, white men, as the nineteenth century progressed and travel across the Atlantic and within Europe became more comfortable, less expensive, and quicker, tourism proceeded down the social scale and expanded to include both genders. Simultaneously, a shift toward the commodification of travel occurred as the rise of consumer culture "stimulated desire in the masses to accumulate 'experiences.'" As historian Harvey Levenstein argues, "the reigning kind of consumerism played on middle-class insecurity by tantalizing people with the dream that what they consumed could change their identities" and, due to the increasing affordability and ease of travel, this consumption now included tourism. While a century earlier people saw the Grand Tour and the exposure it provided to Old World civilization history, art, and architecture as a means of self improvement and cultural refinement, by the 1920s people deemed "recreational tourism—having a good time, having fun" as accomplishing the same goals. The lure of going abroad shifted from exposure to culture and art to the ability to shop, drink, and participate in the more sexually liberal culture Europe was thought to offer. Scholars characterize the interwar years as a particular time when Americans went abroad in order to escape the social and political conservatism of the United States.[41]

[41] Most scholars of travel argue that as the purpose of travel shifted from cultural appreciation, refinement, and education to a leisure and pleasure seeking activity, travelers, or active participants who explored new

Recent scholarship complicates the characterization of Americans in Europe in the interwar period as purely pleasure seeking. Though many American tourists traveled to escape the "heyday for moral policing" at home they did not just shed their national identities once they left the United States. Instead, as Brooke Blower argues, "traveling overseas offered a prime opportunity for self-discovery and self-assertion…Americans gained a sharper sense of themselves as Americans." In short, "Americanness was not simply American made." It was something "worked out in international contexts." As Clara Louise, Anna Bob, and Rosalie were given their trips as gifts, perhaps indicating that traveling still had residual significance as a sign of coming of age or cultural refinement, and Victoria traveled as part of a family vacation; these girls did not necessarily consciously seek to travel as a way to escape the social and political atmosphere of the United States like previous tourists studied. Nonetheless, consciously or unconsciously, the girls encountered situations that challenged the norms framing their

---

places, became tourists, passive participants who saw new places through the lends of different mediators. For this reason, I use "tourist" to describe the girls in this paper. For a robust discussion of the historiography of tourism see Kevin M. McGeough, *The Ancient Near East in the Nineteenth Century Appreciates and Appropriations: Claiming and Conquering*, vol. 1 (Sheffield, 2015). For scholarship that examines travel as a commodity see Levenstein, *Seductive Journey*, xi, 255-56 (quote); and Dean McCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley, Ca., 1999). Sidonie Smith and Mary Suzanne Schriber specifically study the experience of females who travel in their studies *Moving Lives: Twentieth-Century Women's Travel Writing* (Minneapolis, 2001), 30 (quote) and *Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830-1920* (Charlottesville, 1997). Studies of travel before the twentieth century are also useful for contextualizing these girls' trips. See Daniel Kilbride, *Being American in Europe, 1750-1860* (Baltimore, 2013); and William W. Stowe, *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Princeton, 1994). For an argument about the impact of Americans who traveled on international politics see Christopher Endy, "Travel and World Power: Americans in Europe, 1890-1917," *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 4 (Fall 1998), 565-595. Scholar Christopher Kopper argues that in the 1920s and 1930s Americans developed a specific way of American traveling that emphasized spatial flexibility that was then transposed to Europe. See Christopher Kopper, "Popular tourism in Western Europe and the US in the twentieth Century: a tale of different trajectories," *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 20, no. 5 (2013), [777]-792.

home communities and cultures especially related to alcohol, sexuality, and gender relations.[42]

As the sale of alcohol was constitutionally banned between 1920 and 1933 under Prohibition, it is easy to demonstrate that the girls' travel challenged their understanding of cultural norms (or frameworks of licit and illicit activities/behaviors) in the United States by looking at their attention to and experimentation with alcohol while abroad. Though scholarship on tourism often describes American tourists taking advantage of the availability of alcohol "as soon as the tourists boarded their ships," the girls' diaries indicate that this was even a phenomenon for girls in their teens. "Breaking the law" back home on alcohol consumption was understood by reformers as a "male-centered problem," especially among youth. Thus, the girls indulging in the consumption of alcohol while they traveled was not only significant in that they were participating in something that was illegal in the United States, but also engaging in behavior that was associated with men and boys, or typed as masculine. For example, in Paris Victoria drew a picture of what looks like a man and woman drinking together (see Figure 1). While we cannot be sure if the woman in Victoria's drawing was drinking alcohol, as she appears to only have a glass, her juxtaposition next to the man who is visibly drinking

[42] Blower, *Becoming Americans in Paris*, 141, 49, 11, 38. See also Green, *The Other Americans in Paris*. These scholars intervene in the scholarship by going beyond the expatriate and artist communities typically studied to illustrate diverse groups of travelers and residents, from businessmen to university students. In her unearthing of an elite migration of Americans to Paris Green argues that "Americanization" had roots early in the twentieth century and pushes back against scholarship that characterizes the United States as being isolationist in the interwar period. She closely examines the social relations of the encounters American tourists had in Paris to better understand how Americans came to understand themselves abroad. Blower argues that Paris served as a crossroads where Americans grappled with American political and social norms and their sense of distinctiveness. She also gives ample attention to how ideas about "Americanness" and "Frenchness" developed simultaneously in interwar Paris. Importantly, both scholars use French sources to illustrate how the French viewed the American tourists, offering the perspective of both sides of this exchange: a rare feat for scholars of travel and tourism. While these scholars concentrate on Paris, their arguments are no less valuable in studying the girls in this paper. Neither scholar examines youth tourists who were not in college.

**Figure 1**

from a wine bottle suggests that Victoria saw drinking as a male habit, making the attention Elizabeth and Anna Bob gave to drinking more striking. [43]

Consuming alcohol was a defining aspect of Elizabeth's trip abroad. On the second night in Hamburg she described going to a beer garden "where you could get all you wanted to drink and it sure is good stuff." In almost every entry in her diary Elizabeth mentioned having beer or wine. The attention Elizabeth gave to alcohol throughout her entries demonstrates not only the availability of alcohol in Europe, in contrast to the United States, but also Elizabeth's enjoyment in participating in something that was illegal back home, and especially frowned upon for girls and women. The detail she provided to some of these moments is striking, such as when she was in Freiburg and wrote, "Here we can get the genuine wine—as the best is made here…we had a bottle of champagne brought to our room which was the first I ever drank and believe me it sure tasted good. It was the real stuff…also had an awful kick to it." It is significant that she acknowledged that this was the "first [she] ever drank," indicating that she had not drunk, champagne at least, back in the United States. She appears to have thoroughly enjoyed it too, describing that it "sure tasted good." She repeatedly described enjoying the taste of alcohol throughout her diary. For example, "went to Mr. Brand's home where he made a fine drink for us called 'Turkey Blood' This consisted of Red Wine, Champagne &

[43] Victoria Brown Diary, Oct. 23, 1935. Though Victoria went abroad in 1935, after Prohibition ended, her experience of it growing up likely affected how she viewed the consumption of alcohol in Europe. For a discussion of American tourists and Prohibition see Levenstein, *Seductive Journey*, 241 (quote); Blower, *Becoming Americans in Paris*, 107-108 and 152; and Green, *The Other Americans in Paris*, 156. For information on youth culture and Prohibition see Fass, *Damned and the Beautiful*, 310 (quote). Interesting parallels are seen in these examples to contemporary American college study abroad programs in which part of the allure of studying abroad is that alcohol is available to people under twenty one outside of the United States.

mineral water and boy, it was good." The multiple times Elizabeth wrote about exactly what she drank suggests that she saw the availability of alcohol and her consumption of it as a defining aspect of her trip.[44]

In seeming contrast, before leaving for Europe Anna Bob disapprovingly commented on the boy she liked getting "tight," or drunk, at a dance. Yet, once traveling she humorously described members of her travel party being drunk. She also experimented with alcohol herself, such as on the last night of her trip when she was with her friends and they "split a bottle of champagne to celebrate the last night out," perhaps indicating a final embrace of their ability to enjoy alcohol before returning to America.[45]

As something prohibited in the United States, the girls' attention and access to alcohol offers a concrete example of how Europe differed from the American context they left. Similarly, because sexuality was a defining aspect of and controversial issue for American youth culture instances in which the girls wrote about their clothing, the opposite sex, and gender norms indicate that traveling both challenged their understanding of sexuality and opened space for them to explore their own. For these girls, coming to terms with what it meant to "be American" while abroad, in part was defined by their exploration of sexuality.

**"Hot stuff!": Youth Culture and Sexuality in the United States**

While attitudes toward gender and sexual norms in the United States were changing before World War I in the decades after the war sex became rapidly visible, largely due to the rise in mass consumption and popular culture. In short, American society moved toward, what John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman characterize as a

[44] Elizabeth Daum Diary, July 22, Aug. 23, and Aug. 27, 1926.
[45] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, Aug. 17, 1929.

"sexual liberalism" that separated sexual activities from the goal of reproduction and promoted individual sexual satisfaction as a key aspect of both marriage and individual happiness. New technologies, from movies to mass-produced magazines and newspapers, commercialized and legitimized images of women who were more sexual and pleasure seeking than their counterparts from preceding generations. As "sex and sexuality increasingly entered the public sphere" they "became part of the very definition of youth." Adults progressively saw the growing autonomy and mobility of youth as a threat to their authority and pinned society's problem on the group's growing identification. Youthful sexuality, especially surrounding the female body, became a contentious point.[46]

A particular tension between adult authority and youth was the interaction between boys and girls. At the beginning of the twentieth century, courtship rapidly gave way to dating as emphasis was put on romantic love and companionship and the availability of heterosocial leisure spaces, like the theater, dance hall, and automobile, provided places in which youth could socialize outside the confines of the home. The

[46] D'Emilio Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 233 and 241; and Bailey, *From Front Porch to Backseat*, 77. See also, Fass, *Damned and the Beautiful*, 260-280; Ullman, *Sex Seen*, 3-8, 73; Esther Newton, "The Mythic Mannish Lesbian: Radclyffe Hall and the New Woman," *Signs* 9, no. 4 (Summer 1984), 557-575; and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The New Woman as Androgyne: Social Disorder and Gender Crisis, 1870-1936" in Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York, 1985), 245-296; and Linda Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America* (Urbana, Ill., 2002). For scholarship on sexuality in twentieth-century Europe see Clark, *Desire*, beginning on pg. 142; and Robert M. Buffington, Eithne Luibhéid, and Donna J. Guy, eds., *A Global History of Sexuality: The Modern Era* (Oxford, 2014). The 1904 publication of G. Stanley Hall's two-volume study, *Adolescence*, marked the explicit recognition of a distinct life stage between the ages of twelve and twenty-one for girls and fourteen to twenty-five for boys. While this life stage was recognized in the early twentieth century, it was not until the 1920s that a visible national youth culture was "firmly in place." Scholars attribute the emergence of youth culture to shifting family structures, the expansion in and increasing availability of heterosocial leisure spaces, such as school, and the mass consumption of consumer goods and entertainment, from clothing and magazines to movies. As youth spent an increasing time outside the home, surrounded by people their age and advertisements targeted youth as a specific consumer group "peer culture" emerged. Competing with the role of families, peer groups became one of the "primary units of affiliation" that "fulfilled individual emotional needs for security and identity." See Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, 78 and Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox*, 12 (quotes).

activities associated with dating separated youth from previous generations. For example, petting and necking, intimate touching that went beyond kissing but did not include sexual intercourse, became an "initiatory stage" to the "coital experience of adulthood," previously unacknowledged by older generations. Likewise, youth saw their most popular pastime, dancing, as one of their least scandalous activities. Yet this youth view of dancing was in stark contrast to the opinions of adults that deemed the youth's dancing habits as permitting too much movement and contact between the sexes, and especially promiscuous behavior for young girls. Anna Bob explained the different generational perspectives of dancing when she wrote, "Tonite we all sat on the top deck and danced with old papa's who know nothing about dancing." These new forms of sociability, from simple exchanges in heterosocial spaces to more intimate interactions between boys and girls in private, were "part and parcel" of American youth identification and constituted "a crucial site of [individual] identity construction." As will be seen, it was often through these new heterosocial interactions that the girls explored their sexuality during their travels.[47]

How the girls wrote about movies is a telling example of the sexual knowledge available to youth and the contradictory messages about sexuality presented to girls in

[47] D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 258, 256; and Anna Bob Taylor Diary, June 29, 1929. Beth Bailey provides the most comprehensive study of courtship and dating in *From Front Porch to Back Seat*. Bailey argues that as courtship, which traditionally occurred in the home under the watchful eyes of parents, shifted to dating, which occurred in public places, women lost control of the ritual. This was particularly because expectations shifted from the man calling on the woman in her home with her permission to the man taking the woman out and paying for their time together. It is important to acknowledge that the Depression changed courtship rituals. While in the 1920s girls dated various boys in short spans of time, in the 1930s this practice was replaced by "going steady," where a girl and boy would date for extended periods of time. The majority of the scholarship on girl youth culture that this paper builds off of studies a specific type of girl youth culture that was limitedly experienced by heterosexual, white, and middle/upper-middle-class girls. For studies of immigrant and black working-class girls and women see Elizabeth Alice Clement, *Love for sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900-1945* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006); Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in turn-of-the-century New York* (Philadelphia, 1986); and Vicki L. Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America* (New York, 2008).

their teens. Throughout the girls' diaries, whether at home, on their way to Europe, or in Europe, each girl described going to the theater. The attention the girls gave to going to the theater, recording the films' names and the actors in them, and their opinions of the films demonstrates the industry's impact on their everyday life. The act of going to the theater was significant in its own right as it became an activity that youth did with peers, rather than their families, and thus represented a new space outside the confines of the home in which youth could congregate. The girls noted the peer experience of going to the theater in their diaries. For example, Clara Louise recorded seeing "Gold Diggers of 1933" with her friends Helen and Lois, and Anna Bob wrote, "everyone and his pet flea was there [at the theater]." The plots of the films often depicted courtship and marriage, for example, "Gold Diggers of '33" told the story of four aspiring actresses and their trials of love and relationships. Thus, these films regularly upheld norms of femininity, yet depicted and idealized women who freely expressed their sexuality through their dress and habits, such as smoking, and *active* search for an affectionate companion of the opposite sex. Most telling, after Anna Bob saw Gary Cooper on screen she wrote, "I do adore Gary Cooper. Would like him [to] make love to me-A-a baby! Hot stuff!" Although not all of the girls reacted to the films in explicitly erotic ways films prompted within the girls an awareness of "their awakening desires."[48]

[48] Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, June, 28, 1933, pg. 179; and Anna Bob Taylor Diary, Jan. 26 and Jan. 16, 1929. It is important to keep in mind that when Anna Bob said, "make love" it is unlikely she meant sexual intercourse. The names of some of the movies the girls watched further suggest the contradictory images they presented: "Love me Forever," "The Girl Friend," "She got her man," "That's a Good Girl," and "The Man I love." For the impact of the movies on girls in the United States see Chapter Five: "A Guide Factor in My Life": Teenage Girls and Movies in Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox,* 148 and 153 (quote); Ullman, *Sex Seen*; Fass, *Damned and the Beautiful*; Lauren Rabinovits, *Electric Dreamland: Amusement Parks, Movies, and American Modernity* (New York, 2012); and Shelley Stamp, *Movie-Struck Girls: Women and Motion Picture Culture after the Nickelodeon* (Princeton, 2000). The attention to the movies the girls provided while abroad indicates that American girls were not the only ones encountering such images, but girls their age in Europe were also being presented with them. See Victoria de Grazia's *Irresistible*

The tensions between the contrasting images that simultaneously told girls that sex was an acceptable part of their emotional expression and to refrain from it until marriage had specific effects on young girls who met increasingly restrictive gender norms/ideals as they matured from childhood to adulthood. The specific ages of the girls studied in this paper, which range between fourteen and sixteen are important. In her study of teenage girl culture from 1920 to 1945, Kelly Schrum explains that in the early 1930s adults marked these ages as when girls transitioned from "girlhood to sexualized women." This age-defined transition did not consider physiological changes, demonstrating not only the arbitrariness of age but also that the girls' age influenced their understanding of their own body. This is best demonstrated in Victoria's diary through the pictures she drew of her family (see Figures 2-4). In these figures, Victoria illustrated herself visually resembling her mother, in longer skirts, wearing hats, in contrast to her younger sister who appeared in short skirts, short-sleeved tops and dresses, and bright colors. These pictures indicate that Victoria, though only fourteen years old, was expected to wear more clothing than her younger sister, showing that societal norms deemed Victoria's body more sexualized and thus needing to be covered.[49]

---

*Empire: America's Advance through 20th Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 2005) and Kristen Thompson's *Exporting Entertainment: America in the World Film Market, 1907-1934* (London, 1985). The information on "Gold Diggers of 1933" comes from: Mordaunt Hall, "Warren William, Aline, MacMahone and Guy Kibbee in a Musical Conception of "The Gold Diggers," *New York Times*, June 8, 1933.

[49] Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox*, 57. Schrum specifically identifies sixteen as the age marking this transition by looking at ordinances that prohibited girls above sixteen from wearing shorts. For the drawings see Victoria Brown Diary, Oct. 3, 1935, sec. II, pg. 67; Oct. 21, 1935, sec. II, pg. 168; and Oct. 25, 1935, sec. III, pg. 2

**Figure 2**

**Figure 3**

**Figure 4**

As the drawings of Victoria wearing less revealing clothing than her younger sister reflect, though there was an undeniable liberalization in sexual culture, this liberalization still had clear limits. Historian Beth Bailey argues, youth's socialization, and especially their sexual experiences, were governed by two "sets of conventions: the peer conventions that were insistently prescriptive," the right attitudes declared as criteria "for belonging to youth culture; and the official conventions of adult culture and authority, which were dogmatically proscriptive." Both of these systems created "*felt* conventions that existed in the tension between the conventions of youth and of age/authority." The girls described both sets of these conventions in their diaries— they recorded moments in which their parents were present when they interacted with the opposite sex and they also closely monitored the heterosocial interactions among their peers.[50]

However, traveling distanced the girls from their home environments and how explicitly they explored their sexuality appears to correlate with how far removed they

[50] Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, 96.

were from their home conventions. Elizabeth, who once in Europe traveled with a couple from home and then stayed with relatives, explored sexuality the most on the transatlantic voyage which she appears to have taken unaccompanied. Victoria, who went abroad with her entire family, only described one instance in which she interacted with the opposite sex and, notably, these instances mostly occurred under the surveillance of her parents. Likewise, Rosalie, who traveled with her father and dedicated her travel journal to him, which suggests he might have read it, explored sexuality by removing herself from the situations she wrote about and concentrating on the cultures she visited.

Whereas Victoria, Elizabeth, and Rosalie only recorded their experiences traveling, Clara Louise and Anna Bob kept their diaries over the course of the entire year. Thus, comparing and contrasting these girls' writing before, during, and after their trips offers insight into how traveling affected the girls even in the United States. Clara Louise, who traveled without her parents, appears to become more sexually aware in her diary. She seldom wrote about boys before leaving for Europe but once completely removed from her home environment began to record her encounters with the opposite sex, along with similar interactions her girlfriends had. Her attention to her own sexuality and the opposite sex became heightened the more she traveled, suggesting that, for Clara, her trip to Europe served as a sort of sexual awakening.

Among all of the girls, Anna Bob most explicitly explored her sexuality throughout her writing. Even before leaving for Europe she often recorded her desires for boys. The majority of this attention was directed at a boy named J.D.: "O my Dear Darling J.D. Je t'aime très beaucoup parce que vous êtes mon bébé precius." Notably, she rarely incorporated French elsewhere in her diary, and never full sentences like this,

reserving it for moments when she talked about the opposite sex. These moments hint that, even before Anna Bob left the United States, she already had a romanticized idea of the continent, or, at least, of French culture. Though Anna Bob continued to record her and her female travel companions' experiences with the opposite sex throughout her diary, like Clara Louise, she undertook the most exploration during her return journey across the Atlantic, perhaps encouraged by what she encountered in Europe.[51]

The rest of this paper will follow the girls through their journeys, unpacking the moments in which they experimented with their clothing, wrote about boys, and, in the case of Rosalie, commented on gender norms. Although the girls could have had opportunities to explore these issues in the United States, what is important about these diary entries is that the girls wrote them while traveling—indicating that the girls' understandings of sexuality were shaped by experiences they had outside of the United States and with European boys and men. While previous scholarship has asserted that Americans used their experiences abroad "to contemplate their own attitudes about gender roles and sexuality," studying youth travel diaries nuances this scholarship and indicates that, particularly for female youth, figuring out what it mean to "be American" while abroad, meant an exploration of issues specifically related to American youth culture, dancing and dating, and the female body.[52]

---

[51] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, Feb 28, 1929. The fact that Anna Bob grew up with a single mother who openly dated in front of her helps explain Anna Bob's explicitness in her diary. Furthermore, as she did not live with her father, she unlikely feared him reading her diary like some of the other girls who traveled or lived with their fathers might have.

[52] Blower, *Becoming Americans in Paris*, 153. The scholarship on the transfer of youth culture between the United States and Europe tends to focus on mediums, such as music, movies, and magazines, which facilitated this exchange. The girls' travel diaries suggest that a more personal exchange occurred between American youth tourists and youth in their host countries that is in need of further study. This scholarship also typically studies later periods. For example, see Ellen Furlough 'Selling the American Way in Interwar France: Prix Uniques and the Salons des Arts Ménagers' *Journal of Social History* v.2 n.3 (Spring 1993) pp.491-519; Adrian Horn, *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture, 1945-60*

## "Rolling and Rocking": The Journey to Europe

On one of her first nights aboard the S.S. Champlain Victoria attended a "gala entertainment" and described, "There were three numbers, a girl who didn't do much but wiggle her hips, a tap dancer, & a man who played the piano." Though it is unclear if Victoria approved or disapproved of the girl who just "wiggle[d] her hips," the event offers an example of the more sexually liberal culture the girls experienced during their voyage—the girls' diaries indicate that the culture on board the ship was more sexually permissive and less constraining on female behavior and expression. Victoria, Elizabeth, Anna Bob, and Clara Louise all took advantage of the opportunity to explore their sexuality, whether it be interacting, often by dancing, with boys or experimenting with their clothing, during their transatlantic journey. For Anna Bob and Clara Louise, the most exploration they undertook occurred on their journeys home, implying that as they traveled they became more comfortable articulating their sexual selves.[53]

Victoria continued her description of the gala, "the[n] the dancing started…There was a very nice-looking boy whom I had noticed, sitting over in the corner. After a long while he finally asked me to dance. He told me all about himself & I told him all about myself. We danced the next dance & the next." Throughout the rest of the journey, Victoria recorded her time with the boy, Richard. Usually her family accompanied them—Richard would join them at dinner or they would play games on deck. Victoria's

---

(Manchester, 2009); Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley, 2000); and Axel Schildt and Detlef Siegfried, eds. *Between Marx and Coca-Cola: Youth Cultures in Changing European Societies, 1960-1980* (2006).

[53] Victoria Brown Diary, Aug. 18, 1935, pg 72. In their study of steamship travel, Lorraine Coons and Alexander Varias argue, "ship life was pure escapism for both passengers and crew. On board, a passenger could let down his guard." Their study also reveals "women outnumbered men two to one in all classes." See *Tourist Third Cabin: Steamship Travel in the Interwar Years* (New York, 2003), 50, 32. For other work specifically about the transatlantic voyage see Rennella and Walton, "Planned Serendipity." There is also theoretical work on the early modern period that studies the ship as an intermediary space.

awareness of her parents' supervision is evident as she recorded when her parents were with the two and paid special attention to when they were not. She wrote, "Before, when there wasn't anyone in the room. Richard played the piano & I sang. He seems to know every popular song there is. We had great fun!" Her attention to this moment indicates that the trip across the Atlantic allowed space for her to socialize with the opposite sex, both with and without her parents' supervision. Each night the two danced. Her descriptions of these moments are telling, such as when she wrote, "It was great fun trying to dance with the ship rolling and rocking. Richard and I danced every dance" and, the next night, "Then they had dancing. The boat was still rocking & Richard & I had a great time." As Victoria did not record her parents ever disapproving of what she did with Richard, it appears that they did not have a problem with Victoria and Richard's dancing. While we cannot be sure of the type of dance they were doing the fact that the boat was "rolling and rocking" suggests that the dancing was more unpredictable and involved more movement than it would on land—and that Victoria enjoyed it. Being on the boat possibly provided a sort of scapegoat that could be used to permit dancing that might otherwise be seen by her parents as inappropriate.[54]

Elizabeth had a similar "fling" with a boy on her way to Europe. On the third night, "While the Captain was making the inspection of the ship Freda [a girl she met who was also traveling alone] stuck one of the two stewards with a pin and the captain saw it and scolded the steward for fooling with us although he wasn't at fault. The Captain said if it happened again he would put him in chains." She continued on the following day writing, "We have loads of fun with the stewards." Although the captain's

[54] Victoria Brown Diary, Aug. 18, 1935, Part I, pgs. 73-74; Aug. 22, 1935, Part I; pgs. 81-82; Aug. 21, 1935, Part I, pgs 79-80; Aug. 22, 1935, Part I, pg. 83.

reaction reveals that certain decorum between males and females or crew and passengers was expected on the ship, it also exposes the opportunities being at sea offered boys and girls to socialize during the journey. The captain's warning did not stop Elizabeth from consorting with the stewards, particularly one steward named Will. Elizabeth wrote three days later, "Sold chances in the afternoon for Will Jensen. I was dressed in Wills [*sic*] steward suit. Had loads of fun- everyone was laughing at my uniform. To-night at the concert they are going to draw for the lucky winners." Later that night, obvious by the change in pen and writing in the margin, she added, "Will sang wonderful." This was not a one-sided admiration as Will tried to visit her once in Europe, suggesting that the journey served to introduce girls and boys and offered them both the opportunity to explore relationships with each other. The passage is also important since Elizabeth dons Will's uniform. She took the costume one step farther the next day: "To-night there is to be a Masquerade Ball and I am wearing Will's stewards uniform & have my face painted with a mustache and side-burns." Kelly Schrum attributes girls' fascination with cross dressing to it being "exciting, a form of rebellion against the prescriptions of femininity." Thus, by wearing Will's clothes Elizabeth, consciously or unconsciously, was negotiating her sexuality and gender, perhaps recognizing the greater sexual freedom given to men. These moments are significant in the approval and encouragement her peers provided, indicating that their time on the ship offered a positive environment in which the girls could explore and engage their curiosities.[55]

Like Victoria and Elizabeth, much of Anna Bob's interactions with the opposite sex pivoted around the ship's entertainment. Yet, on Anna Bob's journey to Europe it was a "cute little Belgian who plays in the o[r]chestra," that grabbed most of her

[55] Elizabeth Daum Diary, July 12, 13, 16, 17, 1926; and Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox*, 48.

attention.[56] Anna Bob's interest in the Belgian boy rekindled on her journey back home, after her tour of Europe. To follow the girls through their journey, however, we will return to Anna Bob's voyage home after examining how the girls explored their sexuality once in Europe.

## "Land!!": Traveling in Europe

Evident in Anna Bob's fascination with the "little Belgian," European boys and men, not just Americans, presented the girls with opportunities to explore their sexual selves. As Elizabeth, Anna Bob, and Clara Louise all wrote about personal encounters they and their female travel companions had with Europeans, these three girls, who notably traveled without their parents or only with their mother, provide the most explicit examples of this. Though Victoria and Rosalie did not personally interact with Europeans, things they encountered, namely a visible presence of men in uniform and different ideas of gender norms, provided ways for them to explore their sexuality.

Throughout her time in France Elizabeth lamented on the fact that she did not speak French and thus could not verbally communicate with some of her peers. Nonetheless, in one particular instance she wrote, "On our way home from Wissembourg met French soldiers on the train but couldn't converse with them but had lots of fun." Though we do not know how she interacted with the French soldiers, this passage shows that there was an exchange even though there was a language barrier. Since they could not speak to each other, one might presume that the group communicated through body language and gestures, perhaps indicating that Elizabeth had a heightened awareness of

[56] Anna Bob Taylor, July 5, 1929.

her body in these moments and the power her body had to communicate with the opposite sex.[57]

Anna Bob also acknowledged a language barrier between Italian boys she and her female travel companions met. This was particularly true in Italy when both her friend Holland and her mother had Italian "beaus." Her descriptions indicate that these were not just momentary encounters, but extended interactions. Anna Bob described their train trip from Rome to Florence, "Holland had a darling Italian aviator beau on the train and he gave her his picture etc" and later in Milan wrote, "Holland's little Italian aviator met her there." Likewise, Anna Bob's mother had "a young Italian beau" and over the course of a week Anna Bob recorded their experience: "She saw him following her…then he asked Professor to introduce them. Tonite, accompanied by Professor & Mrs. Nash they went for a moonlight drive over the city & he gave her his picture. He can't speak any English & Mother speaks no Italian so the Professor has to do the translating." While it was her mother, and not Anna Bob, dating the Italian, this relationship is nonetheless important. Anna Bob's acknowledgement that there was a language barrier suggests that Anna Bob was exposed to, and likely observed, her mother communicating with the Italian through body language. While leaving Rome Anna Bob wrote, "Mother's beau whose name is Eligio Fratini came to the hotel this morning & bade her good-bye." Almost a week later, her mom received "2 letters from her lil Italian beau." These entries indicate that Anna Bob paid close attention to Holland and her mother's experiences with the Italians. Furthermore, the details she knew about the interactions, from the exchange of pictures to the receiving of letters, shows that Anna Bob discussed these moments with

[57] Elizabeth Daum Diary, Aug. 7, 1926.

Holland and her mother: this attention to detail implies that the women conversed about these interactions and likely saw them as significant moments in their travel.[58]

Like Anna Bob, Clara Louise closely monitored the socialization between her female travel companions and Europeans. These passages are not only notable in that they reveal exchanges between American girls and Europeans, but also in that before leaving home Clara Louise rarely wrote about the opposite sex. Within a description of an all day hike she went on with a group of boys and girls Clara Louise was sure to include information about her girlfriend, Isabel, and a boy Isabel was with: "Run straight down the m't. More fun. Lunch on top. Wear our shorts. (Isabel and Monroe are still gone) Swim in the stream on way down. Very cold! Wear our bathing suits into town! Isabel and Monroe get back just before supper." The attention Clara Louise paid to Isabel and Monroe's time apart from the group shows that Clara Louise was closely monitoring the two—thinking about them while they were gone and acknowledging the exact moment of their return—and suggests that their time alone, away from the group was unusual but nonetheless permissible while traveling. Clara Louise mentioned Monroe, often with Isabel, throughout the rest of her time in Germany. Furthermore, as her time in Germany came to a close she recorded, "German boys eat with us…They leave eventually and we finally retire, rather worn out. Ilse expresses her sentiments to us about the boys rather vividly." Though we cannot infer anything more than the fact that the girls were talking about the boys after they left, it is noteworthy that Clara Louise

[58] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, July 19, 24, 21, 22, and 28, 1929.

recorded this passage about whatever Ilse "vividly" said about the boys, possibly comments related to her own sexual desires.[59]

Clara Louise also recorded her own encounters with the opposite sex: "I stray from the group by accident and lead an uneventful morning…About 4 I go for a walk with a Josef?? [*sic*]…Heavens only knows why. Return and find that the 'German-American' club had taken the others to a beergarten [*sic*] to dance." This excerpt indicates that Clara Louise saw her walk with Josef as important enough to write in her diary and the question marks after his name suggest that she might not have known him well. Not only does the passage reveal that being in Europe, away from her family, offered Clara Louise the opportunity to be alone with boys, it also demonstrates that the group she was with fostered relationships between German and American youth, particularly providing them space to dance. Though Clara Louise could have had similar unsupervised experiences with the opposite sex in the United States, the significance of these passages is that she did not write similar excerpts before getting to Europe. Whether she chose not to write them back in the United States because she was afraid someone might read her diary or she did not have similar experiences at home, her

[59] Clara Louise spoke a rudimentary level of German and the German youth she visited appear to have spoken English, thus she did not record any sort of language barrier. Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, Aug. 11, 1933, pg 223. and Aug. 20, 1933, pg. 232. The information in Clara Louise's diary suggests that Monroe was German. For example, she did not mention him on either trip across the Atlantic and he appeared to be a leader on their excursions in Germany. Like Elizabeth's experimentation with Will's uniform, Clara Louise's description of wearing shorts and her bathing suit into town in the first excerpt also reveals how the girls explored their sexuality through their clothing while traveling. Frequently throughout her time in Europe Clara Louise recorded when she wore her shorts. In the United States in the 1930s, when Clara Louise was writing, there were objections to girls wearing shorts and in some cities even ordinances passed that prohibited girls from wearing them, implying that shorts were controversial and that Clara Louise's attention to wearing them is suggestive of the space which Europe opened for the girls to display their bodies. If we compare these excerpts to Victoria's drawings of her family with the girls' travel arrangements in mind (Victoria traveled with both of her parents and Clara Louise without her parents), it suggests that the girls' exploration of sexuality depended on how removed they were from their home environment and, more specifically, whether or not they were with their father. See Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox*, 57.

increasing awareness of the opposite sex indicates that travel allowed for interactions among youth and made her feel comfortable enough to record them.[60]

Overall, these passages from Elizabeth, Anna Bob, and Clara Louise's diaries demonstrate that they and their female travel companions deemed their socializing with the opposite sex as a significant part of their trips. These interactions suggest that there was a personal exchange going on between American and European youth and also imply that the American girls' understanding of their sexuality was influenced by encounters they had with Europeans abroad.

Victoria, on the other hand, who traveled with her entire family, did not describe any comparable exchanges between her, her mother, or her sister and foreign boys. Nonetheless, she expressed a fascination with soldiers in uniforms throughout her travels especially once in Italy. While she may not have seen writing about soldiers in uniforms as sexual herself, her attentiveness to the opposite sex in an idealized form suggests her nascent or emerging awareness of the sexuality of the male body. In her study of young women, Amanda H. Littauer argues that "a man in uniform represented eroticized wartime adventure" and relates accounts that "noted ubiquitous 'uniform hysteria' among females as young as twelve or thirteen" in the 1940s. Although her study is limited to the United States in a slightly later period, Littauer's appraisal that "the uniform signaled masculine maturity and respectability," might explain Victoria's near obsession with both writing and drawing men in uniform. On her first day in Rome she observed, "You see lots of soldiers around" and continued to describe how "beautiful are the bersaglieri who where [*sic*] a huge spray of feathers in their hats and the carabiniers who are the

[60] Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, July 24, 1933, pg. 205. Clara Louise explicitly indicated that Josef was German in her diary, for example, by explaining that he took her to visit his school.

beautifulest things you have ever seen. They wear cocked hats (black and fancy blue & white costumes with long swords. We see lots of sailors too." Though she does appear fascinated with the intricacy of the soldiers' costumes, she continues to romanticize them throughout her time in Rome, not only through descriptions which appear in almost every entry but in drawings (see figures 5-7 for examples).[61]


**Figure 5**


**Figure 6**

**Figure 7**

Victoria's preoccupation with men in uniform continued when she returned to Paris and described one man as "looking very gorgeous in his uniform" and another, "Oh, he was beautiful!" It is noteworthy that the last entry of her journal is a description and drawing of the changing of the guard at Place de la Concorde (see Figure 8). Thus, while Victoria did not write that she personally interacted with boys while in Europe, whether it

[61] Littauer, *Bad Girls*, 42; and Victoria Brown Diary, Sept. 18-20, 1935, Part II, pgs. 2, 3, and 10; and Sept. 22, 1935, Part II, pg. 16; and Sept. 30, 1935, Part II, pg. 44. Elizabeth Alice Clement also discusses women's fascination with uniforms in Chapter Five of *Love for sale*.

was because she was with her family or not, the acute attention she gave to foreign men insinuates a fascination with the opposite sex, especially in uniform, while abroad.[62]

**Figure 8**

Similarly, Rosalie, who traveled with her father, paid close attention to the politics and gender norms in the countries she visited which indicates that she explored sexuality by reflecting on the cultures she observed. For example, while traveling in Soviet Russia, Rosalie wrote:

> We have been travelling first class through Russia…No effort is made to segregate men and women travellers. A travelling acquaintance of ours, a young lawyer from Amsterdam, was horrified last night when he was obliged to share his sleeping compartment with a Russian bride…The young couple were on their honeymoon. The Russian boast that they are modern and broad-minded about such things! 'Amazingly so!', we think.

Four days later, Rosalie's father bought all of the berths in their sleeping car because, as Rosalie emphasized again, "on Russian trains men and women are put together in the same compartment to spend the night." The attention Rosalie paid to the lack of gender segregation on the train signifies how the American girls' experiences while traveling often exposed them to different gender and sexual norms that challenged the prescriptive ideals at play in the United States. In her acknowledgement that "the Russians boast that they are modern and broad-minded about such things," it is clear that Rosalie was aware of the different attitudes towards and positions of women in Soviet Russia, especially the

[62] Victoria Brown Diary, Oct. 25, 1935, Part III, pg. 5; and Nov. 3, 1935, Part III, pg. 37 and Nov. 4, 1935, Part III, pg. 44.

images propagated by the government of a commitment to women's equality which they deemed key to productive labor and society as long as it was subordinate to the state. In her declaration of "'Amazingly so!' we think" Rosalie directly engaged the status of women in Soviet Russia in a way that suggests she disapproved of mixing the sexes in sleeping quarters. However, consideration must be paid to the fact that Rosalie was traveling with her father and it was her father who upheld the dominant gender norms in the United States by buying the entire sleeping car for her. If we take what is in Rosalie's diary at face value, in comparison to the other girls, she experimented with her sexuality the least, perhaps an indication that traveling with a male companion, notably her father, restricted her. Similarities are seen in the above examples of Victoria, the only other girl who also traveled with her father.[63]

Rosalie offered commentary on gender roles once in Turkey, just as she did in Soviet Russia. She wrote, "One doesn't see many women on the street here. According to Moslem tradition a woman's place is in the home, and she should not go in public." Rosalie did not stop there, however, and continued on to provide an insightful explanation of the political situation in Turkey: "Kemal Attatuck [*sic*] who has westernized his country and robbed it of its native costumes, etc., has been responsible for 'forcing' Turkish women to a great degree from their position of more or less slavery. He also made it unlawful for any one man to have more than one wife." She then offered

[63] Rosalie McLeod Diary, June 29, 1937, pg. 9 and July 3, 1937, pg. 11. For information on sexuality and gender in Soviet Russia see "Managing desire or consuming sex in interwar culture" and especially "Sex and the state in the 1930s: Sweden, the Soviet Union, and Nazi Germany" in Clark, *Desire*, 162-197; and Elizabeth A. Wood, "The Trial of the New Woman: Citizens-in-Training in the New Societ Republic," *Gender and History* 31, no. 3 (November 2001), 524-545. Rosalie was not the only girl to provide provocative commentary on the cultures she visited and political issues. The striking attention the girls gave to the news, history, and political climate of their time appears to challenge American youth scholarship that characterizes youth as generally apathetic to politics in the 1920s and 1930s and needs further study.

a more pointed opinion of the situation, writing, "He is the modernizer and great unifier of Turkey. He has done wonders for his country in many ways by the introduction of modern machinery and higher standards of living, but at the same time, in my estimation, he has robbed it of many charming old customs." While it is unclear what exactly Rosalie thought of the gender norms/relations in Turkey, her detailed explanation of the political climate and women's place within society demonstrates how what she encountered in Turkey inspired her to think deeply about these issues. Though not explicitly recorded by Rosalie, it would not be too much to presume that she compared the situation in Turkey to her own experience in the United States and other European countries. Once exposed to these issues, she likely continued to reflect on them back in the United States.[64]

As these diary entries indicate each girl explored sexuality while in Europe. For Elizabeth, Anna Bob, and Clara Louise, this meant personal interactions with the opposite sex and paying close attention to the experiences of their female travel companions. For Victoria and Rosalie, on the other hand, what they encountered in the cultures they visited, soldiers in uniform for Victoria and different ideals of gender norms for Rosalie, prompted them to explore sexuality in different ways. These moments demonstrate that each girl's understanding of sexuality was in part shaped by circumstances they encountered abroad.

[64] Rosalie McLeod Diary, July 8, 1937, pg. 13-14. This experience occurred while Rosalie was in Istanbul, which appeared to Rosalie and her contemporaries as a crossroads between Europe and the Near East. For information on sexuality and gender in Turkey see Reina Lewis, *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem* (New Brunswick, N.J., 2004).

## "I cried because we had to leave Europe": Returning Home

While Victoria stopped writing in her diary before she made her trip back home, Anna Bob, Clara Louise, and Elizabeth, continued recording their return journey across the Atlantic. Although Elizabeth did not record very much on her voyage home, she closed her diary with an intriguing observation. She wrote, "Great thrill-while walking on deck saw Emil Jannings, the great German actor very good looking." With empty pages left in her diary, it is puzzling that Elizabeth ended her travel diary on this note. Rather than reflecting on her time in Europe, Elizabeth closed her diary commenting on the looks of a German actor, perhaps implying what Europe meant to her: a time to explore her sexuality and express her sexual attraction. Turning to the diaries of Anna Bob and Clara Louise reveals that as they traveled they became more aware of their sexuality and more willing to explore it. For Anna Bob, it meant additional interactions with the opposite sex and for Clara Louise it meant a heightened awareness of her body and inability to dance.[65]

From the moment Anna Bob left the shores of Europe, her trip home was an especially explorative time. She wrote, "Freddie Morton kissed me good-bye full on my mouth in the dining room in front of every one. But I didn't mind," and reflected the next day, "I can't get over Fred kissing me it was so surprising I nearly passed out." It is noteworthy that she recorded not only the kiss, but also the fact that it happened "in front of every one." By feeling the need to clarify that she "didn't mind" Anna Bob indicated that some could see this public display of affection as something meant to be done in

[65] Elizabeth Daum Diary, Oct. 14, 1926.

private. While throughout the trip home she paid attention to her encounters with the opposite sex, one entry can encapsulate these interactions:

> Had a great day today. Spent the morning doing nothing much at all but I had a big time this afternoon. I had six boys with me this afternoon and they all fed me tea and cakes and I had a great time. There was Davis, Bud, Mr. Thornton, Essex, Gordon Carson, and Henry. I am nuts about Essex for he is the type that seems so uninterested in any girl. I'd love to make him [*sic*]. Went to the dance tonight with Davis and afterwards he kissed me good nite. Am I terrible?

This passage demonstrates the attention she paid to numerous boys throughout the trip home and again the sexually permissive atmosphere of the ship that permitted her to allow Davis to kiss her and also be courted by so *many* boys at once. Nonetheless, by asking, "Am I terrible?" Anna Bob appeared to still be grappling with the contrasting images presented to youth in the United States that both promoted sexual behavior as both acceptable and inappropriate.[66]

Anna Bob began and ended her reflection on the journey home by returning to the Belgian boy she met on her journey to Europe. On her first day back on board she noted, "met all my sailors etc. My darling little Belgian that plays in the band came up to me and kissed my hand O-la-la I like him just lots and lots. Better than any of the boys I've met," and when she left him, "Did I say that the little Belgian in the band said he would never never forget me as long as there was a sun. Wasn't that sweet and I (big miss) forgot to get his name." In this passage Anna Bob indicated that her admiration of the Belgian boy was not just from afar, but rather that there was an exchange between the two. Although of course mediated by Anna Bob, this excerpt is also telling in that it provides a brief glimpse into how the interactions between the American girls and

[66] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, Aug. 8, 9, and 15, 1929.

European boys also affected the boys: according to Anna Bob, she made quite the impression on the Belgian boy who "would never never forget [her]."[67]

Just as Anna Bob's trip back to the United States was especially explorative, the longer Clara Louise was away from her family, the more she appeared aware of her sexuality. For example, on her return trip she pointed out, "we go in swimming about 1:30 (Barb, Aleen, & me) and do we get an audience," insinuating that she was aware of people watching her as she swam with her girlfriends and that her body was perhaps on display. Clara Louise also became keenly aware of her inability to dance and how it inhibited her from socializing with her peers. Though she mentioned dancing while in Europe, she only mentioned it in passing and never provided any sort of commentary on her experience. On the boat back, however, she wrote, "Have a get-together but as it is just dancing I don't stay. Barb & [illegible] & I go up on deck. She tries to teach me to dance." And again, three days later, recorded, "So lonesome again. If I could only dance…the parties are dancing parties. It's no fun. I'm all alone again." Once back in the United States, Clara Louise immediately began private dance lessons and within a few months stated, "Dancing in gym…I really enjoy it now." In addition, at the end of her diary she wrote her New Year's resolutions, in which "Learn to dance" is the most heavily underlined, suggesting its importance to her. This heightened awareness of her body and desire to socialize with her peers through dancing on her return journey further shows how Clara Louise increasingly explored sexuality as she traveled. Moreover, her desire to dance once back in the United States, inspired by her return journey from Europe, reveals how what happened abroad, did not just stay abroad. Rather, Clara

[67] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, Aug. 11 and Aug. 20, 1929.

Louise's, and likely all of the girls', experiences traveling influenced them even on their return home.[68]

Most significantly, almost three months after returning to the United States from her trip to Europe a German visited Clara Louise's church group and she wrote in her diary, "Have a most confused feeling inside. A German young man was there. I loved the way he talks." As the most explicit discussion of her feelings towards the opposite sex, it is noteworthy that these lines came after Clara Louise had returned home from Europe and were inspired by a German young man. Indicated by the increasing attention Clara Louise gave to the opposite sex and her own sexuality as she traveled and this noteworthy observation about the feelings awoken inside of her by the German, it appears that Clara Louise's travels, whether consciously or unconsciously, made her more aware of her sexual self.[69]

## Conclusion

Rosalie and Anna Bob's diaries, like Clara Louise's diary, reveal that their trips abroad still influenced them once they returned home. Although Rosalie did not continue her diary back in the United States, she returned to the diary six years later in order to type it up and, while transcribing it, offered short reflections on things she wrote. These reflections demonstrate that even six years later Rosalie was thinking about what she encountered traveling. Likewise, Anna Bob longingly remarked on her time in Europe throughout that fall and winter, such as when she wrote, "I would like to be back in Europe for I love it so over there. I should like to live over there for awhile." Clara Louise expressed a similar sentiment in her end of the year memoranda: "Had a

[68] Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, Aug. 25, 1933, pg. 237; Aug. 24, pg. 236, 1933; Aug. 27, pg. 239; Dec. 13, 1933, pg. 347; and Memoranda, pg. 366
[69] Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, Nov. 26, pg. 330.

marvelous time but I'm afraid I'll never be content to stay home again, very long." While we cannot be sure if Anna Bob or Clara Louise ever returned to Europe these excerpts reveal that they desired to and that the girls thought about the experiences they had once back in the United States. Furthermore, it is hard to imagine that the girls did not reflect on their trips especially with the onset of the Second World War just a decade or two after they returned home. Thus, what they encountered as girls in their teens abroad likely continued to shape their understandings of sexuality throughout their lives.[70]

Like previous groups of tourists studied, these girls' travel challenged cultural norms at home, such as Prohibition and the dominant gender and sexual expectations for white, middle and upper-middle-class girls and women. By interrogating the moments in which the girls experimented with alcohol and their clothing, wrote about the opposite sex, and commented on gender and sexual norms, it is clear that the girls' understanding of sexuality was influenced by what they encountered beyond the borders of the United States. Though this paper has focused on the fair amount of attention the girls paid to sexuality, that is not to suggest that sexuality was the only aspect of life they explored or were attuned to while traveling. By showing that the girls' understanding of sexuality was both challenged and shaped by their experiences abroad, this paper brings attention to an understudied group of interwar tourists. In hopes that others continue to study youth in their teens that travelled in the interwar period, I will leave you with what Anna Bob said her first night in Paris, "Au revoir mais pas adieu."[71]

[70] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, Aug. 23, 1929; and Clara Louise Schiefer Diary, Memoranda, 368.
[71] Anna Bob Taylor Diary, July, 9, 1929.