DANGEROUS ROADS AND RIVERS: SARAH KEMBLE KNIGHT'S GEOGRAPHICAL JOURNAL

By

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DANGEROUS ROADS AND RIVERS: SARAH

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PREFACE

Like Sarah Kemble Knight, I have been raised in a religious community that defines itself by exodus, a religious community in which the journey is still a culturally viable and central metaphor. I grew up with stories of my ancestors crossing the Atlantic by ship and then the Plains on the Mormon Trail, and my father, through genealogical research, has recently discovered that we had two family members in the Mormon Battalion, which completed the longest march in US military history—from Omaha, Nebraska down through Kansas, New Mexico, Arizona, Southern California, and up to the Sacramento area. Thus, travel narratives have played an important part in my psychological, spiritual, cultural, and literary development.

I first encountered *The Journal of Madame Knight* in a seminar on early American autobiography with Dr. William Decker, then read it again a year later in a seminar on the Enlightenment in America with Dr. Ritch Frohock. In both courses, I noticed that our class discussions centered on how Knight's text deviates from the conventions of Puritan conversion and Indian captivity narratives. We discussed it as a violational or rebellious text. Later, I found that critics, almost without exception, have viewed it in the same way. Sargent Bush Jr., for example observes that Knight declares "a self-confidence and an indifference to convention that was, if not unique, certainly noteworthy" (69). The *Journal*, he claims, dramatizes the "increasing secularization" of New England society (72). Others like Scott Michaelsen, Mary McAleer Balkun, Faye

Vowell, make the same or more radical claims. Nobody seems to have considered the possibility that the text might actually have "conservative" aspects, that the text might actually embody Knight's spiritual life to some degree, and that the "religious" moments in the text might actually be taken as religious moments. Instead, critics treat these instances as ironic at best. Of all the critics I surveyed, Bush was really the only one to acknowledge any religion in the text, when he observes, "It might be objected that Madam Knight's record of her thoughts is not entirely lacking in spiritual aspect."

As a student of literature approaching this text, I found these one-sided readings enlightening, but slightly disturbing. In examining a narrative from a writer who comes from a religious background as deeply and culturally rooted as Puritanism, how could it be that nobody would look for any traces of "orthodoxy" in Knight's text? Haven't theorists like Stephen Greenblatt, Annette Kolodny, Edward Said, Raymond Williams, Michel Foucault and many others clearly argued that cultures and texts are more complicated than writings on Knight's *Journal* seem to acknowledge?

I thought about an analogous situation with Mormon writers. In Mormon literature, I have noted that even "apostate" writers, those writers who have left the church, but comment on it and its attendant culture as outsider/insiders, still have a rather distinguishable spiritual world vision. Edward A. Geary has written about a specific group of such writers, comparing them to the "lost generation" writers of the twenties who wrote in the midst of a cultural dissolution. This lost generation of Mormon writers were born near the end of the pioneering period of Mormon history and during the

community's "accommodation with the 'outside'" (91). Geary notes, in fact, that most of these writers knew people who had actually crossed the Atlantic Ocean by sailing ship, crossed the continent by foot or wagon via the Mormon Trail, or been members of polygamous families. Their local communities often valued communal life, work, and judgment over individual values, hence the central figures in their novels are often not comfortable in their community of faith, but are not able to escape it, often times caught between "wanting to become a wholehearted member[s] of the community" and wanting a more individualized life (93-4). These writers share a common view of Mormon history: the founders of the church were charismatic and their "vision of a righteous and egalitarian community...attracted good and idealistic people," but this appealing vision and the "self-serving and possibly self-deluding" leaders created an "authoritarian system which valued conformity above creativity and zeal above wisdom," thus the venture was doomed from the outset (95).

It seemed to me that critics who have dealt with Knight's narrative have read Puritan culture and history in a similar light and have championed her as a rebel against the Puritan system. I felt that their readings have not considered the relationship between text and culture carefully enough, for, like some lost generation Mormon novelists, Knight seems unable to completely discard her religion and her culture. It seemed to me that Knight clings—possibly loosely—to Puritanism as her "only available spiritual anchor against a tide of meaninglessness" (92). This thesis then, is my attempt to flesh

out this tension between what we could call "orthodox" and "apostate" consciousnesses in *The Journal of Madame Knight*.

I decided to approach the text from a cultural geographic perspective because spatial perception and retransmission is such a deeply rooted cultural activity, as writers such as Yi-Fu Tuan, Vine Deloria Jr., Wallace Stegner, Gretel Ehrlich, John Stienbeck, Flannery O'Conner, and William Faulkner have demonstrated. To cite a couple writers closer to Knight's era, we could also note Washington Irving, Mary Rowlandson, and Quintin Stockwell. In commenting on the relationship between culture and space, Edward T. Hall rightly observes, "No matter what happens in the world of human beings, it happens in a spatial setting, and the design of that setting has a deep and persisting influence on the people in that setting" (xi). Furthermore, he notes that as each society has its own mode of perception and language, each has its own "language of space" as well (xii). Thus, a culture's geography weds the phenomenal world and the perceptual world, thereby allowing us a richer understanding of the culture, its participants, and its products.

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DEPARTURE

On Monday, October 2, 1704, when Madame Sarah Kemble Knight left her comfortable Boston home to travel unaccompanied on business to New Haven in the Connecticut Colony, it seems highly unlikely that she thought of her journey as a historically significant occasion. True, women in the British North American colonies did not, as a rule, travel such great distances alone, but they did undertake such journeys in mixed companies. Likewise, it was true that women rarely traveled on business, but it was not at all uncommon for women to be merchants or to conduct business in the absence of their husbands. Knight's errand to the neighboring colony was thus exciting and unusual, but not the stuff of headlines. What has made her journey remarkable, though, is the travel narrative she composed about it and the fact that it survived in manuscript form for 120 years before Theodore Dwight first published it as a revelation of an "interesting [period] in our history" (85).

The *Journal*, which is really a misnomer, since it was "compiled soon after [the author's] return home, as it appears, from notes recorded daily, while on the road," has been read as an important text for obtaining a glimpse of colonial life and customs. As literary scholars have considered the work, they have offered judgments about its place in American literary history and about its literary merits on the whole. Dwight (1825) claims that the narrative displays a "cultivated mind" and a "brilliant fancy" and claims that it should "please those who have particularly studied the progressive history of our country" (85), while Robert O. Stephens (1964) maintains that such literal readings of the journal fail to recognize its literary significance, claiming that it is the product of a "myth-making mind," an "imaginative woman's odyssey through a wilderness both

mystical and actual," fashioned after Homer (254, 247). Peter Thorpe (1966) suggests that the work should be read as an early picaresque narrative since it displays so many key elements of the genre, although he observes that in Knight's work we find a more forceful voice than normally expected in a picaresque narrative; the narrator, he claims, "transcends the disjointed structure and pulls the variety of [the journal's] materials into focus" (116). Knight's no-nonsense business sense is "balanced by [her] fairly strong background in literature" (117).[1] Additionally, several scholars evaluate the humor evident in the account. Hollis L. Cate (1973, 1980) focuses on Knight's use of humor in describing the New England physical and cultural landscape and asserts that it prefigures the dominant nineteenth-century American comic mode. Jacquline Hornstein (1977) notes that the *Journal's* wide "spectrum of comic modes" shows that "a Puritan woman could have a keen sense of humor, a satirical eye, and a sharp self-awareness," in spite of the strong masculine hegemony of her time (13). Eileen Gillooly (1991), in a review essay on American women's humor, maintains that Knight's humor has an aggressive edge, directed against patriarchal society, through which she "comforts herself by taking revenge on her oppressors derivatively, while successfully avoiding their retaliation and, by inscribing her grievances for her own private perusal, their notice as well" (474).

Other critics have focused on the journal as a cultural artifact, exploring what it can tell us about colonial class and racial structures. Sargent Bush, Jr. (1990) writes that Knight's "account reflects social, religious, and economic conditions . . . while clearly conveying attitudes on race and gender, and is accordingly a valuable document for our understanding of colonial life around 1700" (112). Ann Stanford (1984), in a

[1] Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola's "The New England Frontier and the Picaresque in Sarah Kemble Knight's Journal" also treats the journal as a picaresque narrative.

biographical sketch, observes that Knight's work is sensitive to "literary and idealistic currents that would long continue in America" (188), such as depictions of backwoods life, nostalgia for and borrowing from European culture and literature, colloquial oral forms, and the belief that education can be a life-improving tool. Faye Vowell (1976) and Mary McAleer Balkun (1988) both explore Knight's autobiographical impulse in the *Journal*. Vowell traces the different personæ that emerge in the work, concluding that Knight's "attitude toward religion and toward business . . . is closer to that of Ben Franklin than that of the Mathers" and that the narrative "gives an insight into the life of a colonial woman who defies stereotype [and is] representative of the 'liberated woman' in a time and place where we expect not liberation" (52). Balkun opens up the Knight-Franklin connection even more, observing rightly that Knight's multi-valent, predominantly secular construction of the self "predated Franklin's by over fifty years," and is thus a "key text in the project of creating a national 'autobiography'" (23).

Scott Michaelsen (1994) and Julia Stern (1997) push in more explicit socio-political directions, shedding light on Knight's bourgeois mind. "The consumer revolution," Michaelsen writes, "radically changed the terms of self and other, and Knight's text deserves to be read as one of America's key texts for thinking through this problem" (43). He finds that the "most striking thing to be learned from Knight's text is the way in which a heightened class consciousness is coincident with . . . leisure, formality, and elevated patterns of consumption" (35). Stern's treatment considers the dinner scenes in the account, claiming, "in the humorous language of culinary criticism, these scenes constitute the merchant's meditation of the complexity of class in early

American culture, her reading of the food chain" (1).[2] Both of these accounts argue that Knight's *Journal* shows a well-developed bourgeois frame of mind, but do not interrogate their claims about this mindset. They seem to assume that the author carried this point of view fairly unproblematically.

Such readings seem to assume that bourgeois and Puritan consciousnesses are diametrically opposed to one another; an increase in one presupposes a decrease in the other. Thus, they argue that one consciousness eclipses the other in Knight's account. Critics who read Knight's *Journal* in this way seem to consider it an antonymous text; they consider it with a cursory account, at best, of the text's relationship to its cultural moment. Although the work of these critics is valuable in helping expose how Knight's text dramatizes the emergence of an American bourgeois capitalist mentality, as well its relationship to other texts, readings that assert the narrative is the product of a bourgeois consciousness do not acknowledge how the text negotiates between what we could call a socio-economic consciousness and a more conservative religio-moral consciousness. Instead of asking how the work competes or cooperates with Puritan and bourgeois consciousnesses (concepts that, in and of themselves, are rather vague), I would like to explore what factors in early eighteenth-century Boston allowed Knight's narrative to emerge as it did and thus allow us a richer understanding of the interplay between text and culture. I would like to approach the text not only as an artifact, as the product of an "artifice creating" consciousness, but also as a process of negotiation between these two consciousnesses

[2] Another helpful consideration of Knight's work is Ann Stanford's bibliographic essay, "Three Puritan Women: Anne Bradstreet, Mary Rowlandson, and Sarah Kemble Knight."

We do Knight's narrative a disservice if we read it as a cultural product of a solely socio-economic consciousness, because such a reading reduces the relationships in the text to economic relationships. Such a reductive reading renders the religio-moral moments of the text merely conventional or ironic, as well as misconstrue the relationship between Puritanism and capitalism in a way that maybe more reflective of the secularism of our time, or at least of academia. One of the first and most influential thinkers to address this relationship was Max Weber, whose landmark *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*[3] asserts that "the attainment of [wealth] as a fruit of labour in a calling was a sign of God's blessing," and that such a sense of material gain "had the psychological effect of freeing the acquisition of goods from the inhibitions of traditionalistic ethics" (171-2). Protestant, and Puritan, ideology did not give merchants and entrepreneurs *carte blanche* to accrue wealth for its own sake; they were to do well in their callings/occupations so as to add to the glory of God, but were rigorously and repeatedly taught that wealth itself was a powerful temptation that could lead to "relaxation in the security of possession, the enjoyment of wealth with the consequence of idleness and the temptations of the flesh, [and] above all...distraction from the pursuit of a righteous life" (157). Thus, if and only if one created wealth in the process of fulfilling one's divine calling in the world, that is in the process of fulfilling one's duties, then one's wealth could be taken as a token of God's good graces, otherwise it was morally corrupt and corrupting.

Weber was, however, not so romantic as to assert that the Puritans were able to maintain this idealized relationship with material gain. As the "intensity of the search for the Kingdom of God" dissipated, "the religious roots died out slowly, giving way to

[3] First published in two parts between 1904 and 1905.

utilitarian worldliness," though the social forms of the religious community continued to thrive (176).[4] Since congregations were maintained by "exclusive, yet voluntary associations" ("Protestant Sects" 1), any sense of social cohesion was created by *Wahlverwandtshaften*, or "elective affinity."[5] Briefly stated, this concept holds that social groups tend to gravitate towards and adopt institutions and practices that best reflect their values and world visions, their inner-life. Institutions and practices, in other words, are not predestined to arise in a particular society because of any particular virtues or characteristics; societies gradually adopt those forms that will ostensibly promote their well being. It is important to note that this concept, in the words of Werner Stark, is Weber's "theoretical alternative to 'mechanistic causalism and quasi-organological functionalism'" (qtd. in Howe 366).

If we look at the concept of elective affinity in the relationship between Protestant sects and bourgeois capitalism, we find that Weber argues there is not a causal or direct relationship between them. Capitalism and bourgeois ideology became associated with Protestant sects because the religious system's values were favorable to economic growth and Protestant sects embraced capitalism because the economic system provided favorable "worldly" signs to express specific religious values, namely hard work, thrift, and conservative, responsible use of God's resources. Weber observes that capitalism's success in America among Protestant sects came about not because of the "ethical *doctrine* of religion," but because of the "ethical conduct upon which *premiums* are

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[4] Weber observes in his 1906 essay, "Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism," that even as late as the early twentieth century Protestant sects in many places in the United States openly maintained essentially Puritan attitudes and patterns towards wealth, work, and religion.

[5] This concept, according to Richard Herbert Howe, came from Weber's studies in chemistry, specifically from the Swedish chemist Torbor Bergman, who used the term "attraction [or what] others denominate affinity" to describe how substances combine with certain other substances, while not with others (qtd. in Howe 374-5).

placed" ("Protestant Sects" lxi). Capitalists, in other words, found in Protestantism a world vision that was "adequate," or compatible, with their own and *vice versa*. The two could, Weber asserts, coexist and not cancel each other out; Puritan "'economic supermen,'" he claims, maintained a "'religiosity' [that] was...often a more than dubious sincerity," and warns that we "must, indeed, beware" of interpreting their actions "as only opportunistically determined" ("Protestant Sects" xlviii).

These interpretations of Puritan culture that Weber cautions against, as well as earlier socially situated readings of Knight's Journal are, at least in part, based upon a pattern of declension articulated by colonial writers—especially ministers—and later scholars, which asserts that the Puritan mission in the New World was compromised by the inattentiveness and worldliness of the colonists themselves once they arrived in the New World. The most comprehensive account of this narrative of declension is Perry Miller's *The New England Mind*, which explicates the "massive [Puritan] cosmology" he argues held sway "without serious modification...well into the eighteenth" century, and was complete enough to "[classify] all existence" and "[answer] all questions [in] all arts and sciences"(14). Timothy H. Breen and Stephen Foster argue that this cosmology even protected the New English colonies from the "political chaos" and violence that plagued Europe and her colonies (including Virginia) by providing congregations with "meaning for their present, a mission for their future, and...perhaps most of all, a synthetic, but compelling past" (111, 113-4). After a time, however, the Puritan cosmology's power started to dissolve. Miller argues that just a decade after the Bay Colony was founded, "ministers began to complain that sons and daughters were not exhibiting zeal" (11). Gary North claims that "Puritan optimism regarding New England's earthly future began

to fade after 1660," then after King Philip's War in 1675, "a new worldview began to replace older Puritanism [with] a combination of pietism and natural law theory" (3). Breen and Foster claim the demise of the Puritan experiment was the dissolution of the Bay Colony's original charter in 1684 in favor of a new charter, which brought it under more direct control of the crown and Parliament (111). Regardless of the timing and mechanism, writers who hold to the narrative of declension claim within the last forty to fifty years of the seventeenth century, the Puritan hegemony in the New English colonies broke and the population came under the influence of more "normal" political, economic, and social forces. In considering Knight's journal, this timing is significant, since it suggests that Knight's childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood all took place during this state of decline, hence her narrative's supposed lack of religious "zeal."

The narrative of declension assumes that some kind of consensual and stable mentality reigned in the colonies sometime before the middle of the seventeenth century, but, what if consensus was never reached and this decline never took place? This is a question different group of scholars have asked, questioning whether Puritanism ever achieved a stable hegemony in the first place. Robert G. Pope's essay, "New England Versus the New England Mind: The Myth of Declension," argues that historians who favor the narrative of decline have, "in effect, made New England over in the image of its literature," thus they lose "track of New England's realities" by falling into the trap of Puritan rhetoric (315). He maintains that the Puritan community was rather unstable from the beginning, as demonstrated by the "succession of innovations which made church membership more easily obtainable," foremost of which was the Half-Way Covenant. Additionally, Pope asserts that surviving records of church membership

indicate that "the middle of the [seventeenth] century, not the end, marks the lowest ebb in church membership" and activity (318),[6] thus colonial history may be read as a kind of ascension, rather than a declension. Similarly, John T. Shawcross contends that Puritanism was always already fractured and unstable (50). He traces the membership debates and the "Old Path/Unknown Path" controversy from the early eighteenth century through the Great Awakening to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The compromises and shifting terms of the community indicate that Puritanism was, at best, an uneasily held-together system, rather than a cohesive religious and social ideology, he asserts. Thus, we should not speak of New English culture and religion in terms of the "Puritan mind," but rather in terms of "Puritan *minds*" (51; my emphasis).[7] This second model of Puritan history works very well with Weber's claims about the culture, because an already always fractured society would necessarily have to rely on elective affinity and negotiation to achieve even a minimal sense of cohesion.

If Puritanism was a culture that relied more on negotiation than consensus, we should expect to find in Sarah Kemble Knight's *Journal* multiple voices, minds, and world visions, competing with one another for the proverbial spotlight, which is precisely what I hope to show. Knight's text, as other authors have shown, is distinctly heteroglossic, in that it contains multiple genres (travel narrative, ethnographic description, polemic, poetry) and engages multiple opposing world visions (urban/rural, Puritan/non-Puritan, secular/sacred), but one important genre that other critics have

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[6] David D. Hall's essay, "Narrating Puritanism" draws the same conclusion.

[7] Both Robert Blair St. George, in "Artifacts of Regional Consciousness in the Connecticut River Valley, 1700-1780," and Kevin M. Sweeney, in "Mansion People: Kinship, Class, and Architecture in Western Massachusetts in the Mid Eighteenth Century," make similar arguments from the standpoint of material history. Both assert that the so-called "River Gods" of the river valleys of the Massachusetts and Connecticut colonies had to manipulate and negotiate between religio-moral and socio-economic ideologies to maintain their class standing.

overlooked is geography. The *Journal of Madame Knight* is a text rich with geographical and spatial perception and interpretation. Simply the fact that it contains an account of travel through space and time makes its geographical aspects noteworthy, but beyond that, Knight's cultural moment was steeped in geographical thought. The very notion that the Bay Colony could be a "city on a hill," a "New Jerusalem," or a "New Canaan," as Puritan ministers, magistrates, and writers often claimed, relies on a distinct geographical model that heavily influenced colonial thinking and still influences American thinking today,[8] a model that construes space as either sacred or profane. Knight's *Journal* contains traits of physical geography and what we now call cultural geography, which could include ethnography and architectural geography, to report to her readers "what is out there." This report is far from stable, revealing that Knight herself seems to have had an ambivalent relationship with Boston's religious and economic cultures. Like Puritanism itself, Knight's personal world vision is marked by negotiation, demonstrated by that fact that some of her narrative's depictions of place, space, and people seem to arise from a distinctly socio-economic mentality, while others seem to emerge from a more conservative religio-moral mindset. Knight's *Journal*, then, is more complicated than other readings have acknowledged in that it embodies both culturally radical and conservative thought.

[8] Think of the way the US government and media have tried to construct the discourse in the "War on Terrorism." Terrorists are somewhere else—in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Palestine—never mind the fact that "domestic acts of terrorism" are common news items, or that the "Arab world" considers US support of Israel aiding and abetting terrorists, or that covert intelligence and/or military operations can easily be labeled sophisticated or hi-tech terrorism.

GEOGRAPHICAL THOUGHT IN THE NEW ENGLISH COLONIES

In writing a highly geographical narrative, Knight responded to a rather significant feature of Bay Colony culture, namely a keen interest in geography. This interest was especially strong in Knight's hometown of Boston, since from the very beginnings of the colony, ministers and magistrates had used geographical perception as a tool to assert a sense community cohesion. This was an ideological tool that Puritan leaders had brought with them from the Old World, given that European states since the fifteenth century had used geography to reinforce political, as well as cultural boundaries between themselves. Geoffrey J. Martin notes that groups settling New England brought with them from the Old World an impressive "body of geographic learning [that] was already in printed form, though it was known about in detail by only a few" (1). This limited audience began to grow, however, as geography became an important subject at Harvard, first appearing on the curriculum in 1642, and Yale, appearing in 1701; later, it became a subject thought important for the "correct impression" on children and their senses of place and destiny (pp.4-6).[9] Thus more and more New Englanders became conscious of their culture's particular sense of space, a sense that breaks down at several points in Knight's narrative, thus heightening the tension between more conservative and progressive thought in her text.

European interest in geography, like other Renaissance fields of study, proved to radically alter the way many Europeans perceived their world. This change came so quickly and so powerfully that it "amounted to a revolution in the European way of

[9] Martin Brückner, in his essay "Lessons in Geography: Maps, Spellers, and Other Grammars of Nationalism in the Early Republic," demonstrates how this notion continued to gain support well into the nineteenth century.

'seeing' the world," according to David Buisseret (1).[10] Whereas pre-modern cultures in the Old World had constructed their sense of space according to mythical or religious systems, what Norman J.W. Thrower refers to as "poetic geographies" (47), the geographical revolution opened the door to a more empirical, methodical approach to understanding the world. This newer, supposedly objective approach lead to a partial demise of traditional and religious paradigms concerning nations, lands, and populations, resulting in what we might call a (slightly) more detached understanding of land forms and other nations, though political and cultural entities still continued to employ poetic geographies as well in presenting themselves and their interests. This heightened interest in geography, naturally, lead to a renewed interest in cartography and foreign cultures; thus, the discipline became an important area of study.

Following continental precedent, geography became an important subject in English education. Lesley B. Cormack observes that from the late sixteenth century, geography, especially as it was taught in British universities, provided public and political officials with "a set of attitudes and assumptions that encouraged them to view the English as separate from and superior to the rest of the world"(1). These common assumptions had a tremendous impact on British international relations and policies, especially at a time when the nation began to build its naval strength and join Spain, France, and Portugal in the colonial race. Geographical knowledge, she asserts, helped many English merchants and politicians perceive their nation not on the periphery of European civilization, but as "central to world politics and trade" (7). Significantly, though, evocations of "Englishness" still referred to older poetic geographies based on

[10] Fervent European interest in geography and maps began in the during the late fifteenth century with the publication of Ptolmy's rediscovered *Geographia* and the dawning of the Age of Discovery (Thrower 47).

religious or mythical conceptions of space (11). Cormack points out that geography's place in university education, especially at Cambridge and Oxford, meant that the new images of the world became inextricably tied up with nationhood and economic national interests, since "the people responsible for these changes were not outsiders and radicals but part of the larger and relatively conservative ranks of the gentry and merchant groups" (14).[11] Here we find that geographical perception was shaped by an unstable combination of observation, measurement, history, myth, and ideology.

Geographical knowledge crossed the ocean with the Puritan colonists via the libraries of their college-educated ministers and public officials, many of whom studied at Cambridge or Oxford during the early seventeenth century—Martin notes that during the latter half of the 1600s, "there were at least 100 Cambridge graduates and 30 from Oxford in the Massachusetts Bay Colony" (5).[12] More publicly, this interest manifested itself via interest in maps, which had been important to the European concept of the New World ever since the first reports of it returned through the efforts of expedition cartographers.[13] Margaret Beck Pritchard notes that maps and globes throughout the colonies became important material signs of academic interest and status markers (212), for when conspicuously displayed they demonstrated "the expanding world view of enlightened gentlemen" (216-7). This display of enlightenment evinced itself as strongly in Boston as anywhere else in the colonies. In the Puritan capital, David Bosse reports, a distinct map trade developed with the second generation of Massachusetts Bay colonists.

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[11] Cormack's argument about the rise of geography and cartography in England fleshes out a premise of R.V. Tooley's chapter on English mapmakers in his book *Maps and Map-Makers*.

[12] Significantly, Carpenter points out that the first geographical text books published in England appeared during the 1620s (p. 245), around the time that some of the university-educated colonists would have been studying.

[13] Certainly, one of the most significant of these cartographers was Martin Waldseemüller, whose 1507 woodcut map is believed to have been the first to use the name "America" for the new lands, in honor of Amerigo Vespucci (Thrower p.50-1).

Booksellers "frequently offered atlases, maps, and prints, although none of these counted for a significant portion of their trade in the seventeenth century"; by the eighteenth century, however, evidence suggests that maps and globes had become significant "commodities and possessions" in the city and surrounding areas (37). At first, most maps and atlases in New England were imported from England, but, as more and more persons from "a number of occupations" took greater interest in cartography, Bostonians themselves began to produce "a wide range of printed maps and charts" (42-3).[14] Besides serving as status symbols, these objects also became important artifacts in "civic consciousness, trade, warfare, and political administration" (43). Further evidence of their material importance lies in the facts that maps owned by an individual were often noted in probate inventories (37) and were frequently willed to sons upon the deaths of fathers (Pritchard 217).

Geographical thought was apparently significant on all levels of society, though, since it held a prominent position in Bostonian popular culture as well. David D. Hall, notes that the most widely read genres in the colonies were religious or devotional works, romances, and "books of history," each of which relies to some extent on geographical thought, considering that Christian rhetoric is peppered with spatial language and metaphor, that romances invoke "glittering world[s] of miracle and magic," and the histories included quite a number of travel narratives (86-7). Other significant genres employing geography not included in Hall's analysis are exploration narratives and Indian captivity narratives, which were themselves multi-generic and used as devotional literature, polemic, and propaganda. Thus, geographical thought was an important

[14] The first Bostonian map published was John Foster's *A Map of New England* (1677), although Bosse points out that New Englanders began "drawing manuscript charts from they moment they arrived in the New World" (p.43).

element in the multiplicity of Puritan minds, and was readily available to Knight in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Geographical interest was not restricted to physical geography, though. It also extended to what we now call cultural or humanistic geography. One of the most important figures in the geographical revolution and an influential geographer among educated New Englanders was a German-born physician living in Amsterdam, named Bernhardus Varenius. Martin notes that his work was quite influential in England, especially at Cambridge, and that his work was carefully read in colonial American universities into the nineteenth century as well (2).[15] Varenius' primary work, *Geographia Generalis* (1650)[16], is a pivotal text in the history of geographical thought and exerted quite a bit of influence on New England geographical sense. In his book, Varenius set out to create or define a more structured approach to geography that was more firmly rooted in mathematical measurements and empirical observation.[17] He divides geography into "special" or "particular" geography and "general" geography.[18] Though his book focuses on the principles of general geography, those principles that universally apply to all countries, Varenius does provide a valuable of description of special geography.

This category, he writes, is "that which teacheth the constitution and placing of all single Countrys, or every Country by itself" (Varenius 371). The value of this kind of

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[15] Charles Carpenter, notes Jedidia Morse's *Geography Made Easy* (1784) became the standard American geographical text until well into the nineteenth century (246), thus American geography seems to have developed along the lines of these two thinkers.

[16] Unfortunately, 1650 was also the year Varenius passed away—unfortunate because *Geographia Generalis* merely sketches principles, which he claimed he would elaborate in later works.

[17] Preston E. James maintains that Varenius, while living in Amsterdam, realized that the "geographical" descriptions of the day were primarily based upon explorer and traveler accounts and were rather unsystematic, and as such could not be considered serious scientific accounts (125).

[18] These categories, David N. Livingstone notes, were actually first theorized by fellow German, Bartholomäus Keckerman (85).

geography lies in the actual "Experience and Observations of those who have described the several Countries" (qtd. in Livingston 86). Special geography consists of three sets of properties, which are first "*Celestial properties*," meaning meteorological and climatic data, second "*Terrestrial properties*," meaning physical properties (mountains, rivers, etc.), and lastly the "*Humane properties*" (Varenius 374-5). This last type of description encompasses what we now call human, cultural, political, and economic geographies and includes:

> *1. The stature of the Natives, as to their shape, colour, length of life, Original, Meat Drink, &c.* 2. *Their Trafficks and Arts in which the Inhabitants are employed.* 3. *Their Vertues, Vices, Learning, Wit, & c.* 4. *Their Customs in Marriages, Christnings, Burials, & c.* 5. *Their Speech and Language.* 6. *Their State-Government.* 7. *Their Religion and Church-Government.* 8. *Their Cities and most renowned Places.* 9. *Their memorable Histories.* 10. *Their famous Men, Artificers, and Inventions of the Natives of all Countrys.* (375)

Varenius reluctantly acknowledged this third set of properties, but felt compelled to acknowledge it because of tradition and convention—"we must yield somewhat to Custom and the Profit of Learners." The fact that he felt constrained to include these concerns hints at how widely and well-received special geographical accounts were.

The nexus of space, population, and culture that underlies special geography was of particular concern to Puritan leaders, who tried to use spatial perception as a mechanism to maintain community cohesion. Gary North observes that Puritan leaders tried to use spatial order to reinforce community "ethics," since they "saw land hunger as

an anti-social force" (2). Colonists were expected to "live close to each other, share in each other's burdens, pray together, and construct God's kingdom on earth" as tightly-knit communities (16). William Bradford, for example, worried that as members of the Plymouth colony began to "disperse" into the Massachusetts wilderness Christian "fellowship must...suffer many divisions." (153). Later Bay Colony ministers, such as Cotton Mather and John Eliot, voiced similar concerns. The wilderness, they claimed was full of danger, not only in the form of wild animals and Native Americans, but also in the form of excessive moral license; the "freedom of the wilderness presented...men [with the temptation] to behave in a savage or bestial manner," according to Roderick Nash (29). "Morality and order," they claimed, "seemed to stop at the edge of the clearing." Because "wilderness temptations" were seen as so overwhelming, ministers and magistrates tried to keep the colonial population centralized and "pure."

In effect, Puritan fathers in both the Plymouth and Bay colonies tried to use city planning as a means of maintaining spiritual and social order in towns and cities by insisting that colonists live in designated areas and that when a group wanted to move, they had to apply for a land grant. This was a moderately successful system since the Bay Colony's General Court reviewed land proposals regularly, but this land policy's weakness became apparent in the face of so much "unclaimed" wilderness, especially after Thomas Hooker and his followers sold their land in Cambridge, Massachusetts and moved to the Connecticut River Valley.[19] Joseph S. Wood argues that this policy was never really effective in the first place. The "nucleated community" ideal was asserted, but from early on, "as in England...new communities...developed and survived quite

[19] Dennis R. McManis' *Colonial New England: A Historical Geography* offers an excellent account of the dispersal of Puritan and dissident religious groups away from Boston.

well without the necessity of nucleated settlement" (159-60). Ministers and magistrates often publicly denounced these communities, claiming that leaving the fold was both morally and physically dangerous. Because of this center/periphery spatial scheme, geography became a kind of moral measuring devise, which asserted that the further one lived from the center, the more suspect and unsound ones morality was.

As we consider Knight's *Journal* we find that it is replete with geographical concerns, both physical and cultural. Though her narrative tells us of landforms, rivers and other bodies of water, as well as weather patterns she encountered, the most significant geographical presence in the text is Varenius' sense of special geography. Her accounts of the places she encounters provide us with a sketch of the "stature" of the locals, as well as their "meat and drink," "traffics and arts," "virtues, vices, learning, wit," marriage customs, "speech and language," civil and religious governments, religious culture, cities, and famous men. Additionally, Knight employs space in similar fashion to her college-educated English progenitors and colonial leaders in that she uses geography as a means of classifying spaces and people, and it is in this use of space that we can find her world vision negotiating between religio-moral and socio-economic values.

KNIGHT AND SACRED SPACE

One particularly important geographical pattern that Knight draws on in her geography is the scheme of sacred and profane space. Sacred space, according to Richard H. Jackson and Roger Henrie, consists of "[portions] of the earth's surface which [are] recognized by individuals or groups as worthy of devotion, loyalty or esteem" (94). Such places take a central position in both individual and cultural imaginations, since the center, of course, is of "pre-eminent" importance in sacred cosmologies, as Mircea Eliade points out (17). Everything that is not in the center, then, is profane.[20] Yi-Fu Tuan observes that at the root of sacredness is this concept of divided space and, because something "becomes 'holy' [once] it is cut off from surrounding space," human cultures have long constructed walls and other partitions around their sacred spaces (85). Within the walls, space is "ordered" and "complete," while "wild nature [lies] beyond...unfinished and chaotic" (86-7). Despite recent and concurrent developments in geography, though, English and other European geographers during Knight's lifetime placed their nations at the center of their separate cosmologies, thereby relegating other nations to profane space. This center/periphery model, according to Benedict Anderson was a vestige of the pre-modern system of spatial perception in which communities consisted of centers and "porous and indistinct" borders (19).[21] Knight's use of this spatial scheme, then was certainly culturally conditioned.

The primary sacred space in Knight's *Journal* is Boston. The use of a city as sacred space was, of course, centuries old by Knight's time; in the ancient world, cities

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[20] Of course, it is possible that the center could encompass all of the cosmos, as in universalist religions.
[21] Significantly, one of Anderson's arguments in his classic *Imagined Communities* is that during the eighteenth century, nations became defined by more distinct boundaries, which involved more rational methods of demarcation, one of which was geography, via maps.

like Jerusalem, Ur, and Memphis were considered sacred cities and the concept survived through the New Testament, Early Christian, Medieval, and Renaissance eras. It was an important trope in Puritan thought, as well. Boston was sacred on multiple levels, since it was assigned the role of the New Jerusalem by ministers and magistrates and it was an important religious center in the New World, but it was also sacred because it was what Jackson and Henrie call a "homeland."[22] These types of spaces are sacred because they "represent the roots of each individual, family or people" and thereby invoke "strong feelings of reverence" and "non-religious sanctity, [although] there may also be an associated religious connotation" (95-6). These spaces hold great power over persons and cultures because individuals tend to "[recognize] the greatest extent of sacred space at the local level in [their] present," as well as ancestral homes (96-7). Profane space is unfamiliar and, therefore, threatening space. Thus, Knight's residence in and familiarity with Boston made it sacred on this level, if not in the other senses of the sacred.

Because sacred space is socially constructed, those who inhabit profane space threaten its purity and even its status as "holy ground." It is thus highly contested space, according to David Chidester and Edward T. Linenthal. Hallowed spaces are sites of "intensive interpretation" and "contests over the legitimate ownership of sacred symbols" and "symbolic capital" (14-6). Weapons of these struggles include the material and "temporal processes of ritual and practice, memory and narrative, and the ongoing engagement with historical factors and change" (25). Because narrative is a significant

[22] Interestingly enough, through the trope of the city on a hill, Boston is also sacred in that it is "elevated"; Eliade notes that mountains are ubiquitous images of the sacred and that in ascending a sacred mountain, "the pilgrim approaches the center of the world...transcending profane, heterogeneous space and entering a 'pure region'" (16).

tool in inscribing and maintaining sacred spaces, language becomes the medium through which Knight sacralizes Boston within her account.

Beyond giving mere description, Knight's *Journal* uses the sacred/profane spatial scheme to pass judgment on the places and people she visits, using Boston as the standard against which all other spaces are measured. Significantly, the sacred city itself only enters the text obliquely. It remains invisible and goes unevaluated and unchallenged by the author, while other spaces within the text vary in profanity as they "measure up," or down, to Boston. Knight's evaluation of space is particularly important because, according to the Puritan way, people and place mutually implicate one another; profane people reside in profane places, while "holy" people are associated with sacred places. The primary function, then, of Boston in the text is to serve as a baseline against which the space/societies of Connecticut and New York are measured and judged. Once she and her party reach New Haven, for example, Knight observes that generally, her fellow New Englanders "are Govern'd by the same Lawes as wee in Boston, (or little differing)...and much the same way of Church Government" (103). The similarities she notes imply that Connecticut is a less-than-holy duplication of Boston. Politically, Connecticut is also subservient, but similar to Boston in that their governor at the time of her visit was the "Hon^{ble} John Winthrop Esq.," the son of the former governor, and the grandson of "that John Winthrop" who "had bin Gov^{r} of Massachusetts,'" thus he came from an "Ancient and Honourable Family" who came to the New World via the Massachusetts Bay Colony (106-7). Knight points out that the governor possessed the desirable traits of a man in his position: courtesy, affability, hospitality, charisma, and the ability to serve the people and win their affections (107). Knight's relation of the

governor's family heritage before noting his character implies, of course, that his better traits come from his genealogical line, whose roots were in Boston.

Throughout the narrative, Knight repeats this pattern of unfavorably comparing spaces and places in Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York to Boston, effectively casting these places as profane. The *Journal* does, however, contain important exceptions. Once in Connecticut, for example, Knight spends time in the home of Reverend Gurdon Saltonstall, the minister at New London,[23] who received Knight into his home between 9:00 and 10:00 p.m. and "kindly Invited [her] to stay that night at his house" (101, 103). In his home, she is treated very well and graciously (as demonstrated by the fact that he took her in at such a late hour), which confirms his reputation for being "the most affable, courteous, Genero's and best of men" (103). On her return trip, Knight notes that she "Lodged again at Mr. Saltonstalls," where she stayed longer than she had intended at the behest of Governor Winthrop, who urged her to "stay and take supper with him" (113). The Reverend's home is a kind of nodal sacred space because it houses the good minister and is a space wherein Connecticut's good governor dines and extends a hand of fellowship to Knight. The minister's space accordingly becomes sacred because of its occupants and associated people, not its geographical position or appearance. In fact, Knight does not even provide a description of the house, and in this way it is most like Boston. It is a positively perceived, but fundamentally unquestioned place. It is homeland-like, in this regard. Within this place, it is significant to note the deference Knight shows the governor and the minister. Both men are have important charges in providing and maintaining order in a backwards and chaotic space and thus

[23] Bush notes that Saltonstall was later elected governor, where he served from 1707 until his death in 1724 (101).

their responsibilities require them to create ordered space, space that is essentially Boston-like. Because of their communal roles and personal traits, Knight extends towards both men the dignity and respect men in their positions "deserve," the same kind of deference we might expect to find her giving the "holy men" in Boston.

In New Haven, Knight treats her kinsmen and their spaces in a similar fashion. She reports that on Saturday, Oct. 7, she and her guide arrived in New Haven where she was "received with all Posible Respects and Civility," after which she rests from her "long and toilsome…Journey" (103). After this brief respite, she recounts that she "Inform'd [herself] of the manners and customs of the place" while she tried to settle her cousin's estate. Later, she recalls that settling the estate required a trip to New York, a trip her "Kinsman, Mr. Thomas Trowbridge of New Haven" also needed to make, and that in New Rochelle she introduced herself to a "Mr. Burroughs, a merchant to whom I was recommended by my Kinsman Capt. Prout, and received great Civilities from him and his spouse" (197-8). Finally, upon her return to New Haven, Knight was "Kindly received and well accommodated amongst [her] Friends and Relations" (113). These references to her family and friends in New Haven are similar to Knight's description of Rev. Saltonstall's space; their implied spaces of accommodation seem to be classified not by appearance or position, but more in terms of their occupants and status, as signified by their attributes and titles—"Mr." signifies respect, as does "Capt." Invoking her kin, of course, is a related verbal gesture to invoking an ancestral homeland, only in this case, Knight is her "kinsmen's" connection to the homeland. Thus, Knight's relationship to these individuals helps sanctify their places. This classification of her relatives' space stands in distinct contrast to her critical judgment of the rest of New Haven, which she

renders after she initially arrives in the city.[24] Knight's family is hospitable and respectable, thus their spaces receive no detailed description. It is as if she assumes her reader will understand the kind of space and accommodations such persons would offer.

Knight does not always show this kind of deference to important members of communities through which she travels, though. As part of her ethnographic description of Connecticut, she tells the humorous story of two judges who hold a trial out in a pumpkin patch. The case involves a Native American who received a stolen keg of rum from a slave. The trial cannot "proceed in form without a Bench: whereupon they Order one to be Imediately erected, which, for want of fitter materials, they made with [pumpkins]" (101). The "Senior Justice" interrogates the suspect, but is cut off by his "Justice Junr. Brother," who observes that the senior is speaking "negro" to the Native American. The second judge turns and begins to examine the defendant using more "appropriate" language, in which he refers to the keg as a "Hoggshead." The defendant replies that he his not familiar with the term, so the justice removes his hat and pats his head to try and signal "Hoggshead," and the defendant responds, "Hah...now me stomany [understand] that. Whereupon the Company fell into a great fitt of Laughter, even to Roreing. Silence [was] commanded, but to no effect: for they continued perfectly Shouting. Nay, [said] his worship, in an angry tone, if it be so, *take mee off the Bench*" (104). This interpolated tale characterizes Knight's interpretation of Connecticut, especially rural areas, as a space of disorder and chaos. It contains a Carnivalesque mocking of authority figures, who are charged with creating and keeping order. Their being ridiculed by an Indian and his captors effectively negates their position, thus

[24] Knight claims the city and colony contain many "good, Sociable people...but a little too much Independent in their principalls" and too "Indulgent" (103-4).

rendering them impotent. But, the sense of disorder is first signified through Knight's description of the "court." Rather than a formal, symbolically rich courtroom, the trial is set in a field and the judges sit upon pumpkins rather than a formal bench. Knight does not mention whether the party erects a bar, nor does she even say whether the rest of the participants sit on the ground, thus the judges may actually have been *lower* than the defendants and their accusers. This normally highly controlled and symbolic ritual of law, then, is set in a "natural" and disordered place and the relative heights and positions of the participants are uncertain, if not inverted. These details make the incident all the more absurd, making the judges appear all the more incompetent, since they cannot control or impose order on their space.

Still later, on her return trip from New York, Knight recounts that in the town of Fairfield, Connecticut, the well-to-do congregation meets in a "spacious meeting house" and has other "good Buildings" (112). They do not, however, "well agree with their minister, who (they say) is a very worthy Gentleman." Knight observes that the town prospers by renting out their sheep to dung fields, and part of this money pays the minister's salary. The townspeople, though, "Grudg" the expense, "prefering their Dung before their minister." Here again, we have a Carnivalesque rendering of social relationships. Instead of offering deference and respect to their minister, the congregation of Fairfield prefers the dung from their sheep; thus they value the wastes of their animals' body above a holy man, which seems all the more odd, since the town has "a spacious meeting house and good Buildings," which suggests they townspeople have "taste" and a certain level of refinement.

Culturally, Knight characterizes Connecticut as "backwards" or "behind the times." One cultural form she comments on is marriage; she notes that in Connecticut, "They generally marry very young" and that they have a "singular" practice; as the couple comes together to join hands, she writes, "the Bridegroom quitts the place, who is soon followed by the Bridsmen, and as it were, dragg'd back to duty" (104). This practice, she notes is the "reverse to the former practice among us, to steal m^{s} Pride." In his footnote for this phrase, Bush notes that Knight here refers to a common folk ritual in which shortly before the wedding, the bride or groom is kidnapped and taken to a tavern, where she or he must purchase a meal for the captors as a ransom. Here, Knight's comparison between Connecticut and Boston implies that the newer colony has reversed cultural forms of the Bay Colony and that it lags behind Boston in that it retains these folk performances. Besides folk culture, Connecticut looks to Boston for its economic culture, she notes with slight haughtiness that "They give the title of merchant to every trader," and that as currency, they accept "pieces of Eight, Ryalls, or Boston or Bay shillings (as they call them,)" (105). This observation sets Boston up as the economic standard, against which Connecticut does not measure well. Connecticut, then, is on a lower plane of evolution, always one step behind the Bay Colony.

The story about the judges, the description of Fairfield, and Knight's report on Connecticut culture clearly set the colony up as profane space. This general verdict is what makes her accounts of Rev. Saltonstall and his home and of her friends and relatives and their spaces all the more significant. These places are small pockets of Boston-like sacred space in a vast, absurd, and profane landscape. In these cases, Knight's geography seems fairly straightforward. Her descriptions of place are rather conservative in that

they repeat a religiously based pattern of spatial perception. Other geographical descriptions in *The Journal of Madame Knight*, however, are more complicated and unstable. These include descriptions and episodes that take place in both natural and architectural spaces.

KNIGHT AND PURITAN NATURE

The conception of nature Knight inherited was at heart fractured and unstable since nature in the colonies was figured variously as paradise, a potential paradise, a place of revelation, and the domain of the Devil and his minions, therefore it should come as no surprise that Knight's descriptions of terrestrial poperties she encouters are likewise unstable. The Puritan conception of the New World as paradise was undoubtedly influenced by English and other European exploration narratives, which described a land flowing with milk and honey, soil so rich it would make conventional backbreaking agriculture obsolete, thick forests with beautiful trees, and coastal waters teeming with all manner of fish. It was a land that all but guaranteed prosperity. In their report on their 1584 voyage to Virginia, for example, Captains Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow reported finding "such plenty as well there as in all places else," claiming that "in all the world the like abundance is not to be found"(66). They encountered "goodly woods" full of superior cedars, pine, cypress, sassafras, cinnamon, and oak trees (67).[25] To English merchants and investors, America was pitched as a space of secular salvation if only they could get the land settled and the raw materials extracted. Thus, in the great propaganda campaign to recruit sponsors and colonists, the New World became an unspoiled Eden just waiting for civilization.

For those who settled the Massachusetts Bay Colony, this paradisiacal perception of the New World took on specialized religious connotations that did not arise in other colonial groups; for them America was more than a metaphorical Eden, it was a New

[25] Environmentaly speaking, this news could not have come at a more fortuitous time, since the growing population of the Old World and the "expanding maritime industry" had put such a strain on European old growth forests that a new source for timber was welcome, according to Peninah Neimark and Peter Rhodes Mott (23).

Canaan, a new Promised Land for God's chosen. Other European colonies were founded for primarily economic and political reasons, to expand "the accessible environment of each empire...its physical resources as well as its economic and political control," in the worlds of Richard N.L. Andrews (18). To be sure, other European colonists invoked God in their official correspondence, in their bylaws and the rhetoric of their everyday lives, in their legal declarations, even in their references and addresses to native populations, but their reason for being in the New World was to add to their countries' and their own coffers.

Puritan settlers, however, had radically different ideological grounds for settling Massachusetts. Edmundo O'Gormon notes that America grew out of a "complex, living process of exploration and interpretation," the Puritan basis of which was their role as the modern-day Israelites (qtd. in Lawson-Peebles10). Their New World colony was an "area specifically significant to God's design for the world," according to James P. Walsh, figured as both the "New Jerusalem" and the origin of the apocalyptic transformation of both Heaven and earth (91). This sense of New English holy space can be seen in colonial writings from the earliest days of settlement all the way into the eighteenth century.

In this spatial scheme, the wilderness was a favorite trope of New England writers and ministers to both reprove and encourage colonists in their sacred duties as the chosen of the Lord. Samuel Danforth, for example, in his 1670 sermon "A Brief Recognition of New England's Errand into the Wilderness," employs biblical wilderness imagery in admonishing his New World audience to more fully tend to their spiritual lives. He prefaces his sermon with passages from Jeremiah and from Matthew, both of which

figure the wilderness as a space where God can be "found"; the Jeremiah passage hearkens back to the Israelite sojourn in the wilderness when the nation "wentest after [the Lord]...in a Land that was not sown," (Jer. 2:2), while the Matthew passage repeats the words of Christ in referring to John the Baptist, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see?....A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a Prophet" (Matt. 11:7, 9; 151). In each of these passages, the wilderness becomes a site where salvation and revelation can be experienced. Earlier, John Winthrop had made similar assertions in his sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity," stating that the wilderness was not only a place where the Lord could be found and experienced, but could be His dwelling-place, as well. Winthrop claims, "The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as his own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways. So we shall see more of his wisdom, power, goodness and truth than formerly we have been acquainted with" (42). This claim echoes the promise God made to Moses when he lead Israel out of Egypt, "And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 29:45).[26] Winthrop's use of the term "presence" seems meant to be taken literally, since God signified his presence by leading the Israelites in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Thus, Winthrop's statement claims that God's literal presence can and ought to be a feature of the colonists' life in the New World.[27]

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[26] This promise is repeated again in the Old Testament in 1 Kings 6:13 as well as Zechariah 2:10.
[27] This sense of sacred space held sway for the Bay colonists throughout the first decades of colonization, as can be seen in Peter Buckely's 1651 sermon, *The Gospel Covenant*, William Stoughton's *New England's True Interest* (1668), and Samuel Sewall's 1697 tract *Paenomena Quaedcom Apocalyptica and Aspectum Novi Orbis configrata.* Each of these works admonishes the colonists to live up to their special duties as members of God Kingdom on Earth and exemplars of Christianity, using the trope of the sacred wilderness.

Others were apparently uncomfortable with the idea of American wilderness as paradise and chose, instead, to present nature as a potentially sacred space. Peter N. Carroll observes, however, that for many, the New World was not, in and of itself, an Eden, but rather a "wasteland which had to be cultivated and improved" so that it could don the robes of Paradise (14-5). In this conception of New England, the colonists themselves were agents of transformation and would have to be patient since the wilderness was a refiner's fire, in which they would be reproved and cleansed from their own impurities, even as they cleansed and transformed it. After the Puritan experiment stumbled early on, for example, Peter Buckley told his congregation that God had dealt with the Puritans as he had with "his people Israel" by bringing them "out of a fat land into a wilderness," in which they had to struggle with the environment and each other, but he also recalled that the Israelites where "recompensed with a Land flowing with milke and honey" (qtd. in Carroll 69). Samuel Sewall, in 1697, reminded fellow colonists that so long as "nature shall not grow olde and dote" and they remembered to "give the rows of Indian corn their education by pairs," they would "be made partakers of the Inheritance of the saints in light" (186). The potentially Edenic sense of the New World equated the Puritans with God's chosen people and Massachusetts with Canaan, giving New Englanders a sense of destiny or purpose in their new wild land.

Paradoxically, however, the Americas were also figured as the realm of the Devil and demons in league with the natives. Spanish explorers, notes Sabine McCormack, saw evidence of the demonic activity in many parts of the New World, but also admitted that the line between the demonic and the divine could be rather shifty and unstable. The Puritan conception of the wilderness was likewise tricky, sometimes intermixing the

figures of Eden with the Devil's den. Roderick Nash observes that besides standing as an "obstacle...to settlement and civilization, wilderness also confronted the frontier mind with terrifying creatures, both known and imagined" (28). Jonathan Mitchell, a minister in Cambridge, told his congregation that "New England is but earth and not heaven," to which Carroll appends, "and therefore not exempt from the machinations of the devil" (qtd. in Carroll 72-3).

The wilderness was, in fact, taken by many to be a moral battleground. Thomas Shepard told his flock, "The Divell will sometimes undermine and seek to blow up the strongest walls and bulwarks" of Christ's true church (qtd. in Carroll 73).[28] Carroll notes a rather dramatic incident, which John Winthrop took to be a sign of the moral battle in which the colonists were embroiled; in the summer of 1632, witnesses watched a struggle between a mouse and serpent in which the mouse succeeded in killing the snake. Winthrop interpreted the incident, writing that "the snake was the devil; the mouse was a poor contemptible people, which God had brought hither, which should overcome Satan here, and dispossess him of his kingdom" (qtd. in Carroll 74). Nash notes that chief among the opponents in this moral struggle were the New World descendants of the European folk figures of the Wild People; semi-human, immensely strong, and hungry for human flesh, these figures "invested the gloom of the wilderness with a terrifying eeriness that proved difficult to dispel" (12-3). William Stoughten, in his sermon *New England's True Interest*, teaches that the Puritans' sojourn in the wilderness was a

[28] In addition to warning the saints of the Devil's ways, this statement seems to be a reference to the infamous Gunpowder Plot in which Catholic insurgents sought to blow up the Parliament and undermine the English Government shortly after the ascension of King James I, which would associate both the potential evil nature of the wilderness and the Catholic plotters. By analogy then, Native Americans would then be the moral equivalents of Catholics.

"probation-time" for the chosen and that the land had been waiting for the colonists, since "Of the poor natives before we came, we may say (Isaiah 63.19): 'They were not called by the Lord's name, He bear not rule over them.' But we have been from the beginning, and we are the Lord's" (171). Carroll notes that the Native Americans were often seen as "instruments of [Satan's] malice," and that there was, in fact, "a consensus among New Englanders that the natives actively sought comradeship with the devil" (76). With at least three distinct figures of nature in current use by Puritan clergy and colonial officials, it should come as not surprise that Knight's *Journal* portrays nature in a complex and unstable manner.

Nature plays an admittedly small role in Knight's narrative, yet those moments when it does play a prominent part are significant because they allow us access to the cultural consciousness of the author. Encounters with nature in Knight's narrative fall into two general categories: encounters on land and encounters on water. When we look at these moments in the text, though, we find that some are markedly conservative, that is Puritan, performances, while others seem to emerge from a distinctly socio-economic mentality. This vacillation in the text can be explained through Weber's concept of elective affinity; Knight's world vision seems to be fluid enough to allow for both consciousnesses.

One significant feature of a socio-economic consciousness that emerges in Knight's encounters with nature is the tendency to create and reinforce social boundaries between self and other, based on perceptions of economic or status affiliations. These boundaries, of course, have no root in the natural situations Knight finds herself in, but are imposed or projected by the author onto nature itself or onto individuals somehow

associated with natural spaces. The Puritan religio-moral consciousness, of course, also found similar distinctions in the natural world, but these distinctions were expressed in terms of righteousness or communal obligation. The "righteous," for example, remained in the cities and did not disperse into the wilderness. To put it another way, the righteous maintained centralized, urban communities, while the unrighteous created more sprawling and rural (if not primitive) settlements. Knight's narrative contains episodes in the rural wilderness that seem on the surface to be driven by this socio-economic conscious impulse to create distinctions based on status concerns, yet cannot easily be separated from the religious images of nature current in her community.

On the first night of her journey, for example, as Knight and her guide leave Dedham, Massachusetts, he tells her that it is "dangero's to Ride hard in the Night" then adds that "his horse had the sense" to do so (90). She reports that he entertained her with "Adventures" and escapes from "eminent Dangers" he had had while riding after dark. Rather than being impressed, though, Knight is amused by what she sees as her guide's pompousness: "Remembering the Hero's in Parismus and the Knight of the Oracle, I didn't know but I had mett wth a Prince disguis'd." Bush notes that this statement refers to English ballads, works that John probably would not have been familiar with because he could likely read on only a basic level.[29] Thus, Knight uses a literary quip to create or call attention to an intellectual and social boundary she seems to have no interest in lowering or questioning. She goes on to report that they came "into a thick swamp, wch. by Reason of a great fogg, very much startled [her]." This setting, however, does not lead

[29] E. Jennifer Monaghan's essay, "Literacy Instruction and Gender in New England," demonstrates that basic reading skills were prized in the colonies and that young men and women were both given reading instruction to make them productive members of their communities. We can assume that John had had some reading instruction, but considering his apparent social class, it is unlikely that he read "literature."

Knight to consider the threat of nature, since she directs our attention back to her guide—

> But nothing dismay'd John: Hee had encountered a thousand and a thousand such Swamps, having a Universal Knowledge in the woods; and readily Answered all my inquiries wch. were not a few.

The last statement hints at Knight's psychological state, to some vague sense of fear, since she admits to having several questions about their ride, but her sarcasm directed towards John overshadows this reaction. Thus, the humor here both maintains the characters' hierarchical relationship and it contains nature's menace, both of which are alienating gestures.

If we take the structure of this incident into account, we can see how Knight's relation defies Puritan patterns of encounters with nature. The structure can be symbolized as T_1:M_1:T_2:M_2:t_3, with "T" representing notes of threat, "M" representing statements in which she mocks John, and "t" standing in for the veiled allusion to her fear; I use the term "veiled" because she does not reveal what her questions were, specifically, but the context certainly suggests they had to do with the swamp, the fog, and the ride. While each M statement is preceded by a T statement (meaning the statements seem to point towards fear that her readers might expect), the M statements are longer and humorous, and therefore weightier. Thus, while this passage complies with a cultural script on the surface, with its sense of fear in the wilderness, it turns that script on its head through its sarcasm, relegating John to the role of outsider.

The most completely drawn encounter with nature on land occurs on the second day of Knight's journey after she, along with her post-rider guide have entered Rhode Island and have crossed rivers via ferry and canoe. The two spend much of the day and

night riding through thick forest. Knight's fear of this environment seems to rely very much on the Puritan notion of the forest as an abode of evil and mortal threat. At dusk, for example, Knight's dread takes center stage as the setting sun leaves "poor mee wth the rest of this lower world in darkness, with which *wee* were soon Surrounded," and each "lifeless Trunk, with its shattr'd Limbs, appear'd an Armed Enymie, and every little stump like a Ravenous devourer" (92). As the forest falls into deeper darkness, she begins to feel closed in by mortal dangers, and her apprehensiveness is underscored by her capitalized words "Surrounded," "Lifeless Trunk," "Armed Enymie," Ravenous, "all of which suggest the forest is a battlefield or the site of an ambush. Here, nature is not only a space filled with danger, it is filled with malicious and calculating entities that seek to destroy Knight. This is truly a howling wilderness.

Later in the evening, after a worrisome river crossing, Knight finds herself alone in the woods because her guide has ridden on ahead of her. She finds "great difficulty in Travailing" because of the road's narrowness and because "on each side the Trees and bushes gave [her] very unpleasant welcomes wth their Branches and bow's" (93). She claims that the "dolesome woods" and "Terrifying darkness" were "enough to startle a more Masculine courage," and this environment causes her to think on her "Call," which she concludes she "had not so Prudently as [she] ought considered." These details develop her terror of the forest, of course, but they also invoke her sense of religion, noting that her calling "was very Questionable." This observation, of course, is rather ambiguous; is she unsure about her standing before God? Given the link that between spiritual life and one's performance of one's occupation that Weber so thoroughly explicates we may ask whether she unsure that being a merchant is her real calling, or

does she have some kind of moral misgiving about her vocation, or might she be concerned about the degree to which she focuses her attention on profits? The text does not further address Knight's sense of her call, thus these questions may not be answerable, but they are nonetheless valuable because they give us an insight into her emotional state. She seems to consider death a very real possibility and her concern about her call belies apprehension over the state of her soul.

After this moment of reflection, Knight reports having "great difficulty in ascending" a hill, "But being got to the Top, was there amply recompensed with the friendly appearance of the Kind Conductress of the night, Just then Advancing above the Horisontall Line." This sight is so rapturous and sublime that it causes Knight "for the Moment to forgett [her] present weariness and past toils," which must surely include her worrying over her soul, and she inserts a brief ode to Cynthia, the goddess of the moon. She writes that "to meet so kind a guide, / To Mee's more worth than all the world" (3-4). Considering her recent thoughts on her standing before the Protestant God, this hyperbolic reaction to the moon seems very out of place since the poem is essentially a pagan response with no reference to Christianity to check the Greco-Roman sense of the Divine. Additionally, the ode shows off her learning, a performance that seems very out of keeping with the more conservative, austere preceding reflection on the state of her soul.

Beyond her display of "worldly" intelligence, if you will, the poem introduces a significant set of intriguing transformations. The poem notes that after Knight crossed "Yon Surly River to this Rugged shore," she was greeted by "clowinsh Trees" (6-7). The trees that were recently so threatening and frightening become comical and impotent;

after she crests the hill, though, she transforms the forest even more dramatically. The moonlit landscape, she writes,

> Fill'd my Imagination wth the pleasant delusion of a Sumpteous citty, fill'd wth famous Buildings and churches, wth their spiring steeples, Balconies, Galleries, and I know not what; Granduers wch I had heard of, and wch the stories of foreign countries had given me the Idea of.

> Here stood a Lofty church—there is the steeple,
> And there the Grand Parade—O see the people!
> That Famouse Castle there, were I but nigh,
> To see the mote and Bridg and walls so high—
> They'r very fine! sais my deluded eye. (94)

In this passage, Knight completely transforms her field of vision, recasting it as anthropogenic space, and in so doing symbolically obliterates the wilderness, replacing it with a capitalistic vision: a city of riches and consumers. This transformation violently asserts a CITY/country binary opposition to such a degree that Knight essentially claims she prefers this "pleasant delusion" to material reality—"They'r very fine! sais my deluded eye."

The qualities of the vision further underscore the dualistic consciousness that recorded them. The city is not a real city, but is a kind of idealized celestial city. Its sumptuousness and "famous Buildings and churches [with] spiring steeples, Balconies, Galleries [and] Granduers" seem to mark it as what we could call an exclusive space, an upper-middle or upper-class space, somewhere in which neither nature nor country-folk

would hold a place. The presence of "That Famouse Castle" in the quatrain reinforces this sense of social boundaries. Martin Warnke, in writing about the uses of castles in art, observes that these edifices serve paradoxical functions; on the one hand they "originally had a communal function as a refuge for the inhabitants of the region," on the other hand, though, as H.P. Baum points out, "'through their physical distance from the subjects, [they] also created and signaled a social distance'" (41-2; Baum qtd. in Warnke 42). Additionally, Warnke observes, "Many owners of castles considered this social distance necessary for purposes of representation," thus Knight's imaginary castle not only symbolically dominates and dissociates nature, it dissociates social classes as well. This class dissociation, of course, is significant since the socio-economic consciousness of the bourgeoisie seeks not only to reinforce class boundaries, but also to increase the distance between classes, especially between the entrepreneurial and working classes.

Transforming the wilderness into a city, in and of itself, is not problematic in so far as Puritanism is concerned, since the leaders of the Bay Colony spoke often of subduing the wilderness and putting it "to use," but the qualities of Knight's imagined city are problematic. The mere presence of castles and churches with tall spires, of sumptuousness and grandeurs violates the Puritan unostentatious, plain style of architecture (discussed in detail in the next section); additionally though, since these structures are associated with and consciously *display* social rank and status, these imaginary edifices violate important religious/social doctrines of the Puritan leaders in the Bay Colony. Thus, while the wilderness causes Knight to express a sense of fear that is certainly consistent with her religious background, her reaction to this fear, or rather her reaction to the moon's relief of this fear seems to spring more from her consciousness

of social status and display. This episode, then, clearly dramatizes a tension between a religiously-driven reading of the world and a culturally-driven transformation of it.

One of the most significant geographical elements in the narrative, though, is that of water, which was both an important symbol and historical presence in Puritan culture, since all of the first generation of Bay colonists and a fair number of later generations had to cross the Atlantic to get to the New World. This journey quickly became a central cultural metaphor in both religious and civil rhetoric. Donald P. Wharton observes that British colonists in general "looked at sea experience...as a metaphor for Christian life and as a sign of special [Providential] favor pointing to the historic mission of their enterprise" (33). The Bay Colony settlers found the voyage significant for the same reason, but, as Peter N. Carroll points out, it carried additional significance because it introduced the community to "new wonders of divine creation and prepared them for the natural rarities of the wilderness" in and around Boston (29). Puritan passengers recorded in great detail their new encounters on the high seas; Francis Higginson, for example, reports seeing many varieties of fish, as well as sea turtles, porpoises, and an iceberg, while John Winthrop documented "sea fowl, driftwood, and whales" (29-30). Since most of the travelers had not been exposed to such wonders, these new sights prepared them for the strange environment of their new home.

Beyond these new sights, however, the voyage prepared the Puritan colonists for the difficulties and discomforts they would face together in the New World. Records of the voyage contain many references to storms, food shortages or contamination, leaks, and times of dead wind. Richard Steere's poem *Monumental Memorial of Marine Mercy*

(1684) graphically and humorously compares the storm-battered ship he crossed in[30] to "a ball in Sport" tossed "From wave to wave in Neptune's Tennis Court" (qtd. in Wharton 41). John Smith, a passenger aboard the *Arabella*, reports that the ship and crew slugged their way through a heavy ten-day storm, during which seventy head of cattle were battered to death and many passengers took ill (Carroll 28). Carroll observes that the oceanic crossing served as an "initiation ritual" for the community of the faithful, through which God's hand was dramatically manifested and which "strengthened their self-image as the chosen Saints" (35-6). It became a "regenerating, converting experience" which underscored that the New World was indeed a New Canaan, thus culturally sacralizing the space of the Bay colony (Wharton 45). The Atlantic crossing forged a strikingly effective bond within the community because it was perceived as a common trial.

The exodus had such a profound effect on the colonists that it saturated their language of worship and even peppered their language of politics and civic action. Promotional tracts and statements of policy recalled the successful voyages, claiming that the "protection of God" stood as proof of their sacred mission (Carroll 37). Where the imagery and language of the sea had the most profound impact, however, was on religious rhetoric. The image of the sea had long before been established as a metaphor for the Christian soul braving the world, thanks to the biblical stories of Noah, Jonah, and the travels of Christ and his disciples, but this imagery achieved a particularly heightened emotional and visceral sense for the Puritan colonists. Nautical imagery, as Carroll notes, was quite pervasive in sermons, conversion stories, and tracts of the Bay colony well into the third generation, well into Knight's generation (43). John Seeley notes furthermore that second and third generation preachers and writers transferred many of the same

[30] Steere crossed in the *Adventure*.

qualities of oceanic imagery to rivers[31]. Thus, aquatic imagery and language held a prominent, public, and religious place in Knight's cultural moment from her childhood onwards, and it is against this background that we ought to read her encounters with bodies of water.

On the second day of her journey to Connecticut, Knight has her first encounters with water when she crosses the aptly named Providence Ferry as well as two other rivers in the Rhode Island wilderness. Knight's accounts of these crossings employ several important features of the Puritan ocean-crossing narratives. When she crosses the first river after the Providence Ferry, she crosses in a canoe, and her account makes much of her fear of this river, which she claims travelers "Generally Ride thro'" (92). She notes that she "dare not venture" fording the river, so the post rider, her guide, secures a canoe and a boy to pilot her across while he leads the horses. Knight feels somewhat apprehensive in the "very small and shallow" craft, which seems always ready to "take in water." Her fear causes her to be "very circumspect, sitting with [her] hands fast on each side, [her] eyes stedy, not daring so much as to lodg [her] tongue a hair's breadth more on one side of [her] mouth than tother, nor so much as think on Lott's wife, for a wry thought would have oversett" the craft. Her fears, of course, are allayed as soon as the canoe runs ashore and she is able to climb out, tip her "sculler," and mount her horse.

As Knight and her guide proceed on their journey, he warns her of a "very bad River...which was so very firce a hors could sometimes hardly stem it." The post riders caveat that the river's narrowness should allow the two, nonetheless, to pass through it offers his companion no solace. She reports that she "cannot express the concern of mind" this news aroused and that "no thoughts but those of the dang'rous River could

[31] See Seeley's chapter on river imagery and language in Cotton Mather's work.

entertain [her] Imagination, and they were as formidable as varios, still Tormenting [her] with blackest Ideas of [her] Approaching fate." She imagines herself drowning or at best falling into the water and emerging "like a holy Sister Just come out of a Spiritual Bath in dripping Garments." Humorously enough, she will either die, or become a Baptist. Eventually, the two ford the river without any apparent trouble. In fact, she claims that she knew "by the Going of the Hors [they] had entered the water," which her guide tells her is the "hazzardos River" (93). It seems odd that it is the horse's movements that tell her she has entered the river, rather than any sight or sound of the water itself. The woods on the far side of the river are dark and terrifying, and traveling through them causes her to reflect on the afternoon, a day "that [her] Call was very Questionable."

These two crossings recall several important traits of the sea voyage narratives that Knight had encountered throughout her life in Boston. Both crossings were occasions of great fear, even mortal fear. Like the travelers from the Old World, Knight wonders whether she will even live through these two water crossings; and, like those travelers, she reaches the unsure haven of the far shore. Though Knight's account of the day is rather humorous, the fear itself seems genuine. As a matter of fact, her use of humor is very consistent with the assertion that folklorists have long made, which states that humor is one of the most potent ways we have of addressing and containing fear. Additionally, each actual river crossing and Knight's imagined crossing lead to moments of religious consideration, if you will. First, while crossing in the canoe on the first river, Knight is very conscious of being "circumspect," of not literally rocking the boat, and she uses the rather well known biblical trope of Lott's wife to characterize her propriety of action and thought. This emphasis on propriety, of course, was an important

characteristic of Puritan communal worship, and was an integral component of sea-voyage narratives.[32] Secondly, as Knight imagines crossing the second dangerous river, her fear of death is rather understandable, but her fear of "conversion" to the Baptist sect is absurd. Yet, even this humor relies on the Puritan cultural pattern of crossing, since reaching the New World became a "regenerating, converting experience," to recall Wharton's terms. Lastly, as Knight reflects on her experiences after she actually crosses the second river, she begins to reflect on her calling, one of the most important acts of worship in Puritan theology. These crossing episodes are patterned on familiar, conventional, and rather conservative narrative patterns and embody the same emotions of those who openly used these patterns to reify Puritan cosmology and communal values; thus, they hint at the author's sense of religiosity.

Knight's next crossing departs from the pattern somewhat; however, the episode leads to an important religious realization. She reports that when she and her party reach the Paukataug River, she refuses to cross it since it "was about two hundred paces over, and now very high, and no way over to to'ther side" but by fording it (99). She admits, "I darid not venture to Ride thro, my courage at best in such cases but small, and now at the Lowest Ebb, by reason of my weary, very weary, hungry and uneasy Circumstances." So, as her party moves on, she takes shelter in a hovel at the side of the river. The hut is very "wretched" and the inhabitants are "the picture of poverty," still Knight finds the small home "very clean and tydee." This apparently disjunctive circumstance, cleanliness in the midst of poverty, causes the author to write a twelve line poem in couplet form, reflecting on material conditions of her own life, concluding, "When I

[32] One of the most famous references to propriety of action and thought, of course, is the anecdote recorded by William Bradford in *Of Plymouth Plantation* during the Seperatist's crossing, in which a seaman ridicules the Puritan passengers then falls ill, dies, and must be thrown overboard.

reflect, my late fatigues do seem / Only a notion or forgotten Dreem" (11-2). Though Knight's fear keeps her from crossing the river at this time, thus compromising the sea-voyage narrative structure, she nevertheless has an encounter that reinforces an important Puritan value, namely that of accepting ones "lot" in this life.

Two other crossing episodes in Knight's *Journal* recall still more graphically the narratives she likely heard related in church, referred to on other public occasions, or read about in various publications. On the third day of her journey (October 5, 1704), Knight meets up with Polly and Jemima, who are on their way to New London, Connecticut, after Polly "fetched" Jemima (his daughter) from the Narragansette Indians. By the time the father and daughter join Knight, the two had "Rode theiry miles that day," and Jemima was quite sore and "complain'd [about being] very uneasy" (100). In the evening, the three reach the New London Ferry, which they board, and are promptly met with a "very high wind." This wind made for slow going, as it made the boat toss "exceedingly," which in turn caused the horses to "[capper] at a very surprizing Rate, and set [them] all in a fright." At the frantic behest of Jemima, Polly calms his daughters horse, and the party reaches New London, where, "[b]eing safely arrived at the house of Mrs. Prentices," Knight "treats" her companions and discharges them. This episode, while it does not necessarily lead to any "religious" reflection or message, certainly gains power in that it depicts the crossing of a body of water in a boat, which is impeded by a storm. The party, of course, reaches the far side in safety, where Knight buys dinner for the father and daughter, thus displaying generosity and gratitude, two important personal attributes in Puritan theology and culture.

The final significant water crossing of Knight's narrative is when she and her guide, Samuel Rogers, cross into Massachusetts territory. The river, which she does not name, is "swell'd so high [they] fear'd it impassable," which terrifies Knight (116). After Rogers finds a canoe and assures his companion of his "good Conduct," of his ability to handle the small craft, Knight reports that she remained on the shore "near an how'r ...for consultation" before entering the canoe. Rogers then paddles upstream, turns into the current and "dexterously" steers the canoe to the far shore, "swiftly passing as an arrow shott out of the Bow by a strong arm." Knight waits on the shore as Rogers carries their baggage and leads the horses across the river. Knight reaffirms her fear, claiming, "But it is past my sill to express the Exceeding fright all their transactions formed in me." Then she, triumphantly it seems, observes, "Wee were now in the colony of Massachusetts." This episode, again, contains several of the elements of ocean-crossing narratives, fear being one of the most obvious. However, this crossing is distinctly different since it reflects some of the deeper aspects of the Puritans' voyages. She follows a qualified man of "good Conduct" across the water into holier space, although she must travel several days to Boston, the holy of holies.

These water-crossing episodes within the narrative would surely have resonated with her readers since her depictions of them rely to a great degree on elements of the stories of the first and subsequent generation Bay colonists. Even if we grant, as others have suggested, that the first river crossing evinces distinctly anti-Puritan sentiments, the other crossings reflect this significant narrative scheme, which was used to assert the ideal of solidarity with in the community of the faithful. However, even that first crossing owes a great debt to the Puritan symbolism of water.

KNIGHT AND PURITAN ARCHITECTURE

As with her presentation of nature, Knight's depictions of architectural space do not lend themselves to a single world vision, thus reflecting cultural negotiations over the function of architecture in the New English colonies. This conflict revolved around such questions as what the proper relationship between sacred architecture, the community, the body of the faithful, and the Divine should be and over the relationship that exists between domestic architecture and communal values and norms. Additionally, Puritan colonists were challenged by questions of spatial functionality and community order. This was indeed an important cultural struggle since, as Bernd Jager points out, a community's places broadcast a great deal about its values and members. As an example, he cites the "homology" between space, body and community implied by Paul's reference to Christ as the "head of the body which is the church" in his epistle to the Colossians and the "cross-shaped basilica" that came to represent both the crucified body of the Lord and the body of the faithful (215-6). Knight's comments on the architecture she encountered on her journey, then, become important indicators of the social order of the communities and individuals she meets.

To understand the ideological tensions of architecture, it will be useful to look at Knight's productions of architectural space in terms of a concept proposed by Michel Foucault. In his archeology of human knowledge and perception, Foucault theorized the existence of what he called heterotopias, which are "emplacements," that is to say socially read places, where differing world visions are contested. Whereas utopias are "emplacements having no real place," places where "society is perfected [thus] essentially unreal," heterotopias are "real places, actual places, places that are designed

into the very institution of society" ("Different Spaces" 178). Utopias, in being (unreal) spaces of idealized order, "afford consolation…[and are] fantastic, untroubled region[s]"(*Order of Things* xviii). Heterotopias, on the other hand, are somewhat disconcerting since they are spaces in which multiple "real emplacements" are "represented, contested, and reversed," thus any heterotopia "has the ability to juxtapose in a single real space several emplacements that are incompatible in themselves" ("Different Spaces" 180-1). Significantly, they are usually "connected with temporal discontinuities," that is they "begin to fully function when men are in a kind of absolute break with their traditional time" and are "absolutely chronic" (182). Elsewhere, Foucault notes that heterotopias are necessary, since space "is fundamental in any form of communal life," thus "fundamental in any exercise of power" ("Space, Knowledge, and Power" 252). Heterotopias, then, are where the forms of society are both challenged, altered, abandoned, and reified, mended, reaffirmed. The journal of Madame Knight contains several types of heterotopias—churches, homes, taverns, market places, and shops—and it is to these places that we can turn to see the dynamic negotiation between bourgeois and Puritan values in Knight's text.

Since one of the basic functions of the Puritan colonies was to set up a divine commonwealth, ministers and magistrates sought to ensure the "purity" of the community through laws, sermons, and material artifacts. One of the aims of these institutional and cultural measures was to simplify religious life, which, according to both English and New English Puritans, had become too complex, too ritualized, and too clergy-centered in Anglicanism. Puritans like John Milton, William Bradford, John Winthrop, and Thomas Shepherd, etc., contended that the Church of England, like the Catholic Church

from which it "split," had accrued too much political power and had become too complex and ritualistic to allow individuals to develop the kind relationship with God they felt was necessary for salvation. Puritan colonists and their leaders, therefore, consciously sought to create both a society and a space where simple humble devotion to God was the governing principle in opposition to the societies and spaces of England dominated by the Anglican church. The founders of the Puritan colonies, therefore, believed that the New World would be a place where they could set up more "godly" communities based on the Calvinist principles of "simplicity of life and...personal application of the teachings found in the Bible" (Dow 101). This program included rigorous efforts to simplify the material lives of the colonists, signified by the Puritan plain style of architecture and artifacts of their daily lives.

This effort to direct Puritan communal life was founded on the idea that too much attention to material life distracts from ones ability devote sufficient attention to God and to ones spiritual life. Ministers and magistrates accepted the axiom that states the inward man or woman is reflected in the outward man or woman; thus, if the inward man or woman was to be humble and simple, his or her material existence should be as well. The colonial legislatures enacted sumptuary laws to codify this expectation of modesty, and this ideal informed the colonists' sense of architecture and space. In his seminal study *Architecture, Ambition, and Americans: A Social History of American Architecture*, Wayne Andrews cites a letter from John Adams as a representative expression of the Puritan community. In it he openly proclaims his distrust of the fine arts, which includes architecture,; "From the dawn of history," Adams writes, "they [fine arts] have been prostituted to the service of superstition and despotism" (33). In other words, Adams

claims that literature, music, art, and architecture have traditionally been employed by false creeds (read Anglicanism and Catholicism) and the state to oppress worshipers and citizens.

This "artistic" architecture of the Anglican and Catholic Churches created sacred spaces that, in the minds of Puritans, called more attention to themselves than to the Divine and the community of the faithful. These spaces were, in the terminology of Bernd Jager, "festive" buildings; buildings that "[give] us the mysterious body, the enchanting landscape, the language of poetry" (224). These buildings were designed to embody the symbol-rich ceremonies that took place in them and to impress upon the Christian mind and body the power of God and God's church. In like manner, the English aristocracy built homes that were laden with material markers of family status and power. Amir H. Ameri, in his ground-breaking essay "Housing Ideologies in the New England and Chesapeake Bay Colonies, c. 1650-1700," observes that Anglican colonists in Virginia brought with them the "architectural vocabulary" of their homeland to assert their social status. This vocabulary included the use of brick and stone for domestic architecture, fireplaces on opposite ends of the house, and "conspicuous display of chimneys"; such elements were calculated to associate the homes and homeowners "with the 'religious houses and manor places' of 'their Lords' and 'great personages'" in the Old World (10). Such "tangible forms and materials had an intangible reward," Ameri asserts, for they allowed "Anglican colonists to reproduce the signs [of aristocracy] and live through them the dreams and aspirations that had compelled them to take the arduous journey across the ocean and into the 'wilderness'" (11).

Earlier Puritan architecture, by contrast, was less ostentatious, less calculated to overtly display power and status. Communities constructed "mundane" houses of worship and residences that embodied their "world of tasks, of infinite mediation, and instrumentalizaion" (Jager 224). Both public and private buildings were hefty wooden structures made of large hand hewn beams of oak and pine, since the Puritans associated brick and stone architecture with clerical and aristocratic conspicuous consumption.[33] Their houses of worship were not "places [of] theatrical gaudiness," in the words of Cotton Mather; in fact, Hugh Morrison adds, Puritan ministers and magistrates even discouraged the colonists from using the word "church," preferring "meetinghouse" instead, since it was "nothing more, in itself, than any other meeting place" (79). On the outside, meetinghouses were simple edifices, divested of the intricate ornamentation and symbolism of Medieval and Renaissance churches in the Old World; they were, in the words of George Francis Marlowe, basically "square in plan with hipped or pitched [roofs], perhaps with a porch but sometimes without tower or belfry of any kind" (2). On the inside, they were likewise austere, with no high pulpit and balustrade, no alter, no columns, no specialized spaces within—no naves, no apsises, no shrines—no decorative ceilings or walls. This plain style was calculated to help the congregation focus their thoughts and efforts on the word of God, their spiritual lives, and the community of the faithful. Thus, the Puritan architecture of worship embodied the ideal circumspectness of the individual soul and the body of the faithful saint.

[33] Ameri argues that a small number of brick houses had been built in the Puritan colonies during the seventeenth century, but that this was certainly not because materials were unavailable (as some have argued), since the same materials were just as scarce in Virginia. This relative absence cannot be attributed to matters of climate either.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, however, the "meetinghouse plan gave way to the church plan" (Marlowe 2).[34] Sacred architecture became more and more elaborate, since "the piling up of profits...enabled the New England colonists to indulge in their own Georgian version of Renaissance architecture," in the words of Wayne Andrews (*Architecture in New England* 12). Their churches began to look more and more like other Protestant churches, constructed of brick or stone, with tall steeples, a long, rectangular chapel, and the interiors included pulpits, columns, and wide central aisles. Thus, as prosperity increased, the colonial economic mind began to impose itself on Puritan life, altering one of the most important and visible artifacts of the community of the faithful.

Knight's references to churches in her text align her with this newer sense of sacred architecture. When traveling through the Rhode Island forest, for example, as she crests the hill and projects on to the trees the image of a city containing "churches, wth their spiring steeples, Balconies, Galleries and I know not what: Granduers w^{ch} I had heard of, and w^{ch} the stories of foreign countries had given me the Idea of" (94). Here, in her comforting vision and transformation of the howling wilderness, Knight imagines sacred space that is quite out of keeping with her cultural heritage. The "Granduers" of Knight's fantasy, "spiring steeples, Balconies, Galleries," etc., are features associated with Anglican churches and Catholic cathedrals, rather than frontier Puritan meetinghouses. Later, in New York, she reports, the residents "are Generally of the Church England and have...a very fine church set out with all Customary requisites" (109).[35] Knight's complimenting the building indicates she has either rejected or doubted

[34] Marlowe does note that the church plan did not become dominant until the beginning of the Revolution.
[35] Bush notes that Knight refers here to Trinity Church on Wall Street (109).

the notion of the plain style, and her reference to and capitalization of "Customary requisites" clearly shows favor for custom and convention over theology and its material manifestations.

Knight uses the term *meetinghouse* twice in her journal and both uses carry rather negative overtones. Stamford, Connecticut, she reports, is a "well compact" town, but has a "miserable meeting house" (111). Bush notes that the congregation of the town voted in 1702 to build a new church, which was not completed until a year and a half after Knight's visit (111). Whether Knight knew about the proposed building or not, the evaluative nature of the adjective "miserable" communicates a sense of revulsion for the edifice, a rather "artistic" reaction. The next meetinghouse in the text is in the "considerable" and "wealthy" town of Fairfield (112). The problem here lies not in the building itself, which she describes as "spacious," but in the tension between the congregation and their minister; Knight reports that the townspeople pay the minister with money they receive from renting out their sheep to dung local fields, but "they Grudg" taking care of his salary because they "[prefer] their Dung before the minister." In this case, the meetinghouse itself is adequate, but either the religious leader himself is inadequate or the community is. The text could be taken to support either reading, since the narrative mocks small town society, but regularly shows deference to ministers, secular governors, and the law.[36]

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[36] Knight refers to Rev. Gurden Saltonstall of New London as "affable, courteous, Genero's and [the] best of men" (102) and to Rev. James Pierpont of New Haven as a "holy good Gentleman" (111). Furthermore, she refers to the Governor of New Haven as the "Hon^{ble} John Winthrop Esq.," the son of the former governor, and the grandson of that John Winthrop who "had bin Gov^{r} of the Massachusetts,'" thus he came from an "Ancient and Honourable Family," a family who came to the New World through the Massachusetts Bay Colony (106-7). Knight points out that the governor possessed the desirable traits of a man in his position, courtesy, affability, hospitality, charisma, and the ability to serve the people and win their affections (107). Of Connecticut, she notes that they "are Govern'd by the same Laws as wee in Boston," but that the people themselves tend to be lax (103).

Knight's negative comments towards meetinghouses, especially when compared to her comments on churches, belie a deep and fundamental dislike for the plain style itself, and since the basis of this style was doctrinal and communal, her comments can be taken to suggest that she had concerns about her religious community, but when we consider the positive nature of her comments toward churches, her stance becomes rather ambiguous. Buildings of worship, then, are distinctly heterotopic since they become spaces in which multiple world visions are brought into contact with one another. Her references to sacred architecture do not seem to support any conclusions about her attitude toward the institution signified by the edifice, thus we cannot conclusively argue that her world vision devalues religion.

Another significant heterotopic space in Knight's narrative is taverns, which were unanimously considered necessities by Puritan leaders and colonists, even as early as the days of the Plymouth Colony. One of the earliest crises the Plymouth colonists faced came in February, 1621 when they ran out of beer and had to rely on the good graces of the *Mayflower's* captain, who allowed them to occasionally partake of the crew's store, until it also ran low (Lender 2); a decade later, members of the Massachusetts Bay Company were advised by Rev. Francis Higinson to "furnish [themselves] with things fitting to be had" that would be unavailable in the New World, including "malt for drinke" (qtd. in Dow 3).[37] Alcohol was, in the words of Mark Edward Lender and James Kirby Martin, "more than a luxury in the colonial mind; it was a necessity to be kept close at hand," since it kept well on voyages, supposedly promoted good health, and was safer than the polluted water colonists left behind in Europe and expected to find in the

[37] Dow illustrates how the colonists followed this advise by recalling that the *Talbot* stores for the colonists contained "6 tons of water, 45 tons of beer, 20 gallons of brandy, [and] 20 gallons of Spanish wine (Malaga and Canary)" (5).

New World—hence "most settlers drank often and abundantly" (2, 9). The occasions for drinking were likewise abundant since alcohol was appropriate for public events, such as communal projects like "clearing the common fields or raising the town church," as well as for more private occasions like working on ones own house or fields (9). David W. Conroy maintains that alcohol tended to minimize, to a certain extent, the hierarchies of Puritan colonial life, for "gatherings to drink in colonial America" allowed "an entire range of values of social, economic, and political significance [to be] acted out or acknowledged and reaffirmed" (6). Alcohol consumption, then, brought disparate social and class perspectives into spatial contact with one another.

Quite often, of course, this contact took place in taverns, which became important social hubs of New England towns and were often among the first buildings erected in new settlements (Lender 12). They became common centers for conducting "everything from the transmission of news to the execution of business transactions" (Conroy 75); they served as court rooms and town halls (14);[38] they were seen as a sanctuary from drafty meeting houses between Sunday meetings, where colonists could be "warmed and fortified" against the cold (Morrison 91); many even served as post offices with boxes for letters and new papers (430). Taverns were built in the Puritan colonies for the benefit of both travelers and townspeople, and were licensed by the colonial assembly and later the town selectmen. The charter of Andrew Belcher's tavern in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for example, states that he was licensed to "sell bears and bread for entertainment of strangers & the good of the Towne" (qtd. in Morrison 91). Mary Caroline Crawford notes, however, "many of the first rural taverns were built for townspeople and could not

[38] Morrison also discusses this multiple use of taverns as "official" space, adding that some taverns even reserved certain rooms for public business (91).

accommodate overnight guests, a situation that changed as intercolonial became more frequent" (qtd. in Imbarrato 35).

Because so much official business was conducted in taverns, they were not always seen as low palaces of vice and decadence. Conroy asserts that because so much legal and town business was conducted inside taverns, colonists were comfortable "associating [them] with that most paramount of Puritan concerns—the maintenance of law and order" (16). Additionally, because their businesses were so integral to the well being of colonial life, tavern owners awarded higher social status (Lender 13).[39] Even though taverns often served as "official" spaces, during the latter half of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth, ministers and public officials began to sense the potential that these spaces had to mitigate social hierarchies and thus began to openly advocate temperance, passing legislation meant to curb public drinking and tavern attendance, but not abolish them, as Conroy points out ("Puritans in Taverns" 43). Legislators and clergy each had different approaches to the situation; civil officials "usually had temporal concerns in mind" when they passed drinking laws, having made the connection "between drunkenness and crime," while ministers were motivated by a similar, more spiritual concern over the connection between drunkenness and sin (Lender 16-8). At the heart of these concerns was the desire to maintain a stable social order, which they felt could be eroded in the ordinaries. Conroy observes that Puritan New English inns can be read as "public stage[s]" on which both men and (eventually) women "tested—and ultimately challenged—the authority of their rulers and social superiors," hence ecclesiastical and civic leaders worked in concert to "suppress traditional drinking

[39] Imbarrato even notes that some British travelers were surprised by the status colonial tavern keepers were given (33).

habits while preserving traditional notions of hierarchy and deference" (*Public Houses* 2,8).

Among the social relationships that Puritan officials worried about were those between men and women. Tavern space, therefore, became sexualized, with front rooms being considered masculine space, back rooms were feminine. Morrison provides an example of this spatial scheme when he relates that between Sunday meetings "the ladies usually [retired] to a large bedroom beyond earshot of the barroom," where the men imbibed and debated politics, daily concerns, and religion (91).[40] Susan Clair Imbarrato's novel essay, "Ordinary Travel: Tavern Life and Female Accommodation in Early America and the New Republic," asserts that taverns and inns were originally "the realm of male clientele and set up for male travelers," but that as women's travel became customary they needed shelter as well (30). This increased female presence tended to reduce, but not eliminate, the distance between men and women, thus "as the female traveler [entered] these institutions, gender exclusivity [was] challenged" (34).[41] Though tavern culture ostensibly "demanded that the woman adapt rather than the institution," taverns created strange and tense new social relationships (Imbarrato 36). Outwardly taverns seemed to help maintain gendered expectations, women were only allowed to drink in the barroom when they were traveling, for example. But, business concerns sometimes required these expectations to be breached; female travelers often had to adjust to the cramped sleeping arrangements that sometimes required them to share a

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[40] Morrison's observation of the sexually divided space is articulated in greater detail in Jessica Kross' essay "Mansions, Men, Women and the Creation of Multiple Publics in Eighteenth-Century British North America," with male space being the front of the house, while female space was found in the back. The two authors' works suggest that this spatial arrangement cut across class boundaries and held great influence for quite sometime in the colonies.

[41] Bonnie Frederick and Susan H. McLeod, as a matter of fact, assert that "challenging" gendered expectations "is at the heart of women's travels" (xxii).

room or even a bed with a strange man at the end of a rigorous day of travel, since tavern owners usually had to double up on sleeping arrangements to make money. Thus, "concern for virtue was often overshadowed by the need for a proper night's sleep" (38). Puritan taverns, in time, proved to be significant grounds for negotiating social relationships on many different levels.

Knight's *Journal* deftly embodies the social, moral, and economic negotiations Puritan's engaged in while participating in tavern culture. It contains three episodes that directly involve people consuming alcohol in taverns, and each reflects a tension the author seems to feel between more traditional moral values and the bourgeois values of the marketplace. The first episode occurs in Fishers' Tavern where Knight hopes to find a guide to accompany her to Billings' Inn in Dorchester, Massachusetts, but finds all the men "tyed by the Lipps to a pewter engine" (87). She writes that drinking so occupied the tavern's patrons that they "scarcely allowed themselves time to say what clownish," but Dwight notes that the manuscript was torn at this point, thus Knight's thought is incomplete. The partial statement, however, helps establish Knight portrayal of the sauced customers. The term "tyed" implies the men are dependant or enslaved by the liquor, a characterization very consistent with warnings about the dangers of drink issued by ministers and civic officials in the Puritan colonies[42]. The reference to the unspecified "clownish" utterance, however, seems to come from a different mindset altogether. The term seems to reflect on Knight as a kind of consumer of entertainment, which would be consistent with Stern's reading of the *Journal's* preoccupation with orality. On the other hand, "clownish" could also signify the idea that alcohol alters the drinker in a way that

[42] Ministers sometimes referred to intoxication and alcohol dependence as a kind of sleep. Increase Mather, for example, warned that overdrinking would put the "conscience into a deep Sleep" that they would awaken from "in the midst of Eternal Flames" (qtd. in Conroy "Puritans in Taverns" 44).

corresponds to a clown's "altered" clothing, speech, and place in society. Though the first possibility probably makes more sense, the statement's incompleteness make its interpretation indeterminable. Nevertheless, her characterization of the drinkers is humorously ambiguous. Is her critical tone driven by her socio-economic consciousness or her sense of morality? It could realistically be either or both.

One of the lip-tied toppers, John, ends up being Knight's guide for the short trip. The price he names is rather consistent with the drinking patterns among the Puritans as described by Conroy, Lender, and Martin. He asks for "half a pss. of eight and a dram." As a matter of fact, Knight provides John with two drams—one in Fishers' tavern "to bind the bargain," and a second in Billings' Inn, "according to contract" (91). The author's language here clearly reflects her economic consciousness, though fulfilling one's duty was an integral Puritan value as well. Thus, even this brief encounter with John embodies a tension between economic consciousness and a more conservative moral consciousness.

Knight's third reference to tavern drinking takes place in Havens' Tavern the very next evening, where she complains about the "Town tope-ers in next room [sic.]" who keep her awake (95). The two keep "calling for tother Gill,[43] w^{ch} while they were swallowing, was some Intermission." The toppers, in ordering round after round, are clearly intemperate drinkers, with each drink "like Oyle to fire, [encreasing] the flame." Furthermore, Knight implies one of the drinkers was especially objectionable when she grumbles about his "Roering voice" and his Thundering blows with the fist of wickedness on the Table." Knight's sense of objection is reinforced when she recalls that a female friend was kept awake "a whole night, on a Journy, by a country [Leftenant] and

[43] Bush notes that a gill was a ¼ pint drinking vessel.

a Sergent, Isigne and a Deacon, contriving how to bring a triangle in to a Square." Their trying to make a square of a triangle, or, to put it another way, their attempt to subvert the laws of geometry, signifies the vice of the drunkards in this brief tale. The attempted subversion, the wicked fist, and the roaring voice combine to dramatize how excessive drinking can threaten normative, rule-regulated order, reflecting the claim made by Bay Colony leaders in their temperance campaign. Here again, though, the narrative contains a humorous twist in that Knight "[composes her] Resentments" in the form of a brief ode to "Potent Rum," in which she enjoins the liquor to "Intoxicate them [the drinkers] with thy fumes: / O still their Tongues till morning comes!" (6-7). Thus, even as she passes a clear, moral judgment on the drinkers, she opportunistically enlists rum as an ally. Like the description of the toppers in Fishers' Tavern, this one starts out consistent with a more conservative Puritan stance, but then softens the critique through humor.

Knight's account contains one more reference to people consuming alcohol when she writes about the "Vendues," or open air markets in New York. Merchants, she notes, do "very well" at these venues,

> for they treat with good Liquor Liberally, and the Customers Drink as Liberally and Generally pay for't as well, by paying that which they Bidd up Briskly for, after the sack has gone plentifully about, tho' sometimes good penny worths are got there. (110)

The author's take on this practice of inebriating customers to drive up profits is difficult to ascertain. On the one hand, the fact that she refers to the merchant's "Earnings," a term that seems to legitimize their venture, combined with the fact that she is a business woman could suggest that she does not look on the practice negatively, though she does

not condone it outright. On the other hand, though, her repetition of the words "pay" and "liberally," along with the related term "plentifully," seems to approximate the language of a sermon, in which sinners "pay" for their sins and drunkards are condemned for their excessive drinking. This second possibility seems plausible, though not clearly so. The thread that seems to hold these accounts of alcohol together is Knight's objection to excessive drinking rather than to drinking as such.

Knight's discomfort with, or dislike of "backwoods" tavern culture is clearly drawn in three related episodes in which she encounters tavern hostesses who she feels represent various failings of rural, that is to say not-Boston space. The first of which occurs on the first night of her journey in Fisher's Tavern in Dedham, Massachusetts. In this episode Knight and the hostess haggle over the price for John, who is to escort the author to Billings' Inn in Dorchester, Mass. where she will meet up with the postal rider. Though we only get a part of the exchange between the two women (Dwight notes that half a page of the manuscript was missing), Knight makes it very clear that she finds the hostess belligerent and greedy. She reports that she declined an offer from the hostess, pronouncing that she "would not be accessary to such extortion" (p. 87). This refusal, infuriates the hostess who carries on indignantly for such a long time, that the author claims she "began to fear [she] was got among the Quaking tribe, beleeving not a limbertong'd sister among them could out do Madm. Hostes." Thereafter, Knight negotiates a fee directly with John, which the hostess finds too low and "chetachises" him for accepting the terms, "saying his poor wife would break her heart." This hostess, in trying to control the transaction within "her space," violates the sexual scheme of place. Additionally, Knight's references to what we could call "dissident" religious patterns to

underscore the hostess' "vices." She is worse than a Quaker and she chatechises John, though she has no official authority to do so since he is not her son, brother, or husband.

The second episode takes place on the very same night in Billings' Inn. Upon entering the inn, the "eldest daughter of the family" verbally accosts Knight:

> Law for mee—what in the world brings you here at this time of night?—I never see a woman on the road so Dreadfull late in all the days of my versall life. Who are you? Where are you going? I'me scar'd out of my witts. (p. 91)

The young woman, recognizing John asks him about Knight and when he refuses to answer, she falls "anew into her silly questions." Between this onslaught of speech and the young lady's not asking her to sit down, Knight clearly feels decorum has been violated and attempts to dismiss the young lady with a brisk answer. She may also have felt insulted, since the young hostess' questions to John seem to imply some sense of impropriety—"Where in the world are you going with this woman? Who is she?" A married man on the road at night with a strange woman could, and likely would have been read as morally questionable.

Knight's objection to being marked as a foreign, immediately suspicious body is clearly conveyed in her treatment of the young hostess, whose posture towards the traveler seems to change once she hears about her guest's journey. She offers Knight a chair, runs upstairs, returns wearing "two or three Rings," and begins to speak to the author more civilly, making exaggerated gestures to show off "her Ornaments, perhaps to gain the more respect." The young woman's jewelry and display violate the spirit, if not the letter of Puritan sumptuary laws in that they call attention to the young woman's

material state. To use a contemporary term, Knight objects to the young hostess' conspicuous consumption. Knight seems to gain final victory, however, when she asserts that if the young lady's grandmother's pig (ring sow) were to appear, it would warrant the same attention.

The third reference to offensive or inappropriate women's speech takes place in a Rhode Island inn where Knight, the post rider (her guide), and the French doctor traveling with them find "tollorable accomodation" (98). The hostess, a "full mouth'd old creature," dominates the space by complaining to the doctor about her "bodily infirmities" so loudly that she disturbs the taverns other guests, who sneer at her in disgust. The hostess apparently violates some kind of decorum through her loud speech which calls public attention to her body.

Taken together, these three incidents reify the sense that residents of rural or outlying cities and towns are somehow fallen from social as well as theological grace. All three women violate the gendered arrangement of space in addition to other significant violations of social conduct: the first hostess is too preoccupied with money and tries to control her space as would a magistrate or minister; the second hostess violates social codes by marking her body with signs of material success, as well as being rude, ungenerous, and extremely suspicious; the third hostess violates decorum through calling attention to her "grotesque body" (to use Bakhtin's term), that is through calling attention to her less than ideal body. Knight's critical presentation of these ladies relies on the dispersal and vice pattern that Puritan ministers elucidated from the pulpit and in their tracts.

To further complicate Knight's depiction of taverns, we need to keep in mind that many taverns, most in rural areas, were also the homes of the owners and were thus sites of multiple value systems since they served a double function. House architecture in the Puritan colonies developed along similar lines as architecture of worship. They were built primarily of wood and had rather simple exteriors. The most common house form in the seventeenth century was the saltbox house in which the floors were separated into roughly equal halves by a double-sided fireplace and chimney, while the back of the house consisted of a lean-to, sometimes added later, sometimes built by design. The chambers on the first floor were referred to as the hall and the parlor; the hall was the more public of the two, often serving as a dining room and a sitting room (Robinson & Robinson 99), while the parlor was more private and formal, holding the family's best furnishings, artifacts of value (silver and brassware), and the parents' bed, and was often used for entertaining important guests (Cummings 27). The upstairs rooms were called the hall chamber and the parlor chamber, depending on which room was below, and were used as storage spaces and sleeping chambers for children and guests. The lean-to contained the kitchen and more storage space, although it could also be used for sleeping as well.

Early Puritan homes were not built to display family status; they were built for functionality, with little decoration. Roof beams, cantilevers for the second floor, and exterior wall studs were usually bare inside, leaving exposed the wattle-and-daub or brick insulation, and were unadorned with scrollwork or other ornaments. In fact, the load bearing members of houses were often hewn directly from felled trees with axes, treated, then put up without any significant finish work (Robinson & Robinson 94). Like

churches, housing architecture and decoration was expected to be mundane, that is, built for the tasks of daily living, signifying the simple life of a believer. Cummings reports an incident that illustrates how rigorous this expectation could be: in 1632 John Winthrop chided Thomas Dudley for spending too much on the interior of his home when he had it wainscotted (paneled), effectively hiding the exterior wall studs; Dudley claimed the wainscotting was to help the house retain heat more efficiently, but Winthrop obviously found it ostentatious (168).

As some colonists became wealthier, they moved away from these conventional forms, some building with brick, others devoting more attention and expense to interior walls, decoration, and painting (Robinson & Robinson 106). Morrison reports that before 1700, "only eight houses of brick and four of stone are known to have been built" in the New English colonies (51-2), although as merchants and public officials became more familiar with Georgian architectural forms, which included extensive use of brick and multiple chimneys, more and more homes were built to display wealth and status, especially in Boston where there was a large non-Puritan population and trade was heaviest. Thus, among the middle and upper classes in Boston, house architecture became an important sign of status, or as Wayne Andrews declares, "masters of new fortunes naturally looked for new ways to impress their neighbors with their importance," and so a "battle of styles" eventually overpowered the plain style (*Architecture in New England* xxiii).

In Knight's narrative, houses become important tools for judging the homeowners, following an a old literary tradition.[44] C.L. Salter and W.J.Lloyd, in their

[44] Using a person's home as a means of evaluation goes back at least as far as Roman literature when the country house poems were used as either panegyric or critique of the owner/social system.

monograph *Landscape in Literature*, observe that we "may infer a full spectrum of personality traits through portrayal of a person's home," since we "expect shelter to serve as an extension of the individual" (23). Thus, Knight's descriptions of these homes serve not as just as "settings" for the action of the narrative, but also to serve as a means of judging the individuals owners.

Two of the inns that Knight describes are discernibly saltbox houses, since she reports that her sleeping quarters were in lean-tos at the back of the respective ordinaries. In Billings' Inn, Knight lodges in a "parlour in a little back Lento, w^{ch} was almost fill'd wth the bedsted" (91). She writes that the bed "was so high that [she] was forced to climb on a chair to gitt up" to it and that the bed was "wretched," nevertheless, she "Stretcht [her] tired Limbs, and lay'd [her] head on a Sad-colourd pillow [and] began to think on the transactions of the past day." Interestingly, it seems that the lean-to in this inn has been organized according to the emerging sense of privacy in the Boston area, since Knight refers to her sleeping space as a "parlour," but this is not surprising since Bush notes that the inn was "well known to Bostonians," and favorite stop of Samuel Sewall (90f). Since it was a spot regularly visited by Bostonians, it seems logical that they would carry the newer concept of divided and function-oriented space to this out-lying area, thus on this point the periphery began to emulate the center. Knight's calling attention to the lean-to, however, ensures that the inn remains distinct from Boston, and in this way her text contains the possible threat posed by its progressive sense of space. Knight's disappointment with the arrangements, however, is communicated by her complaints about the height of the bed, its wretchedness, and its apparently unwashed pillow. When coupled with her account of the young lady of the house, we find that

Knight reads this space as a kind of "uppity" space, one that imitates the forms of Boston, but lacks the status and sophistication of her home.

Knight's other recorded experience in a lean-to takes place on her way to New York with her cousin in an "ordinary, w^{ch} a French family kept" (107). As with many other taverns, Knight complains about the cooking, claiming that the "[Frenchman's] undertaking [was] so contrary to [her] notion of Cookery, that [she] hastened to Bed." To get to her bedstead, she ascends up "a pair of stairs w^{ch} had such a narrow passage that [she] had almost stopt by the Bulk of [her] Body." This description tells us that the house was rather old and "out of fashion," if you will. Abbott Lowell Cummings observes that staircases in seventeenth-century homes were "starkly functional," being only as large enough to allow access to the rest of the home; furthermore, staircases featured "narrow winders" and a steep pitch, as well as being fully enclosed (162). In the Bay Colony, this type of stairway began to disappear around 1675 when carpenters began cutting away the interior walls adjacent to the steps and constructing balustrades for a more open sense of space and to take advantage of natural and ambient light (164). Knight's details on the stairwell communicates that the design of the house is most definitely out of fashion. Her critical portrayal of the space continues with her observation that the "Lento Chamber [was] furnisht amonst other Rubbish with a High Bedd and a Low one, a Long Table, a Bench, and a Bottomless chair." This description indicates that this chamber doubles as furniture storage space and as a bedroom, which, of course, does not conform to her urban middle-class sense of segregated space. She compounds her critique by describing the chamber as if it were a barn—"Little Miss went to scratch up my Kennell [to make

the bed] w^{ch} Russelled as if shee'd bin in the Barn amongst the Husks, and supose such was the contents of the tickin." Her accommodations, of course, were miserable:

> ...being exceeding weary, down I laid my poor Carkes (never more tired) and found my Covering as scanty as my Bed was hard...my poor bones complained bitterly not being used to such Lodgings...and poor I made but one Grone, which was from the time I went to bed to the time I Riss, which was about three in the morning....

In addition to sleeping on an uncomfortable bed, Knight was further inconvenienced by having to sleep in the room with "the men," who "complained their leggs lay out of [their bed] by reason of its shortness" and groaned with her all night. The next morning, Knight grumbles, she "discharged [the] ordinary w^{ch} was as dear as if [she] had had far better fare." Basically, she complains that she had been cheated.

There seems to be two possible explanations for Knight's harsh commentary on both of these inns. One, her judgments could be motivated by the religious concept of centrality as taught by the Puritan fathers and magistrates, who advocated centralized settlements closer to Boston and the Bay, since living in the wilderness would ostensibly lead the settlers to become wild men and women. The other explanation holds that Knight's complaints arise out of her more secular Bostonian consciousness, which read smaller, more rural settlements and settlers as inferior. This second possibility certainly lies behind her criticism of the French family's inn since she basically equates her sleeping quarters with a barn, dismisses the Frenchman's cooking, and claims she paid too much for her room and board; of course, the fact that the proprietors were French must also factor into her critical disposition. Billings' Inn however is a bit more

complicated. Surely the young woman and her sleeping arrangements offend Knight's Boston economic/social consciousness, but the tavern can also be read as a "sinful" space because of the young lady's conspicuous display of her jewelry, which Knight interprets as an attempt to demonstrate a higher status or as an attempt to curry favor beyond what she deserves.

Complicating this situation is the fact that the night after she stays at Billings' Inn, the author spends the night at Havens' Tavern, which may have also been a saltbox house, but she is far less critical of her hosts and the building itself. Knight reports that she and her guide were "very civilly Received...courteously entertained in a clean comfortable House," and that the matron of the house is very helpful and accommodating (94). She describes her "Apartment" as being a "little Room parted from the Kitchen by a single bord partition," which allows the locals' conversation in the next room to keep her awake, which is her only complaint about this particular tavern. This spatial arrangement is very consistent with the older, non-segregated sense of space when the kitchen was also a storage room, curing shed, and bedroom, yet because the proprietors offer such acceptable hospitality, she does not complain. In fact, Knight notes that on her return trip to Boston she, along with her guide, spend another night at "Haven's and had Rost fowle" (116). Thus, it seems that Knight's criticizing houses with lean-tos has more to do with the owners than with the actual homes themselves, even though Bostonian architecture favored larger and more elaborate houses.

Perhaps Knight's most "bourgeois" house description, if you will, comes when she describes the domestic architecture and materials she encountered in New York. The author's description calls great attention to the non-wood materials and decoration of the

homes she visits, signifying her awareness of how domestic architecture could be, and was used to signify status and rank. The houses are made from bricks of "divers Coullers and laid in Checkers, being [agreeably] glazed," the interior walls are plastered, and the summer beams and joists supporting the floors of the second stories are left exposed, but are "plained and kept very white scowr'd as is all the partitions if made of boards" (109). The fireplaces do not divide the interior spaces into halves, but are located at the ends of houses, with their backs "flush to the walls," their hearths made "wth the finest tile that I ever see" and run "farr out farr into the Room," their mantles "made as ours with Joyners work, and as I supose is fasten'd to iron rodds inside" the walls, and at least one house that she notes has "Chimney Corners like ours." All this attention to brick architecture seems to reveal Knight's preference for this building material, which, again, was considered a status symbol in Boston. The staircases in these homes are "laid all with white tile which is ever clean, and so are the walls of the Kitchen w^{ch} had a Brick floor." Knight's description reveals that she had a good eye for detail, a solid understanding of architecture, and keen appreciation for good workmanship and costly materials. Her unabashed admiration for these homes seems to arise from her more secular consciousness, although, as Wayne Andrews points out, New English craftsmen were considered some of the finest in British North America (*Architecture, Ambition, and Americans* 34).

It is however, within the context of housing architecture that we find the most "radical" moment of the text, the most extreme departure from what we could call the "standard protocols" of a Boston world vision. This moment comes in the river house as she waits to cross into Stonington. Other accounts of this scene have read it quite

cynically, as evidence of her "class racism," in the words of Michaelsen. Certainly, if we read the "details" of the episode at face value, this interpretation would make sense; but, if we examine the episode closer, we find that it varies greatly from the other architectural space descriptions and in these variations lie a very different sense of space/society.

Knight initially describes the hovel as "one of the wretchedest I ever saw a habitation for human creatures" (99). Rather than reacting with revulsion, though, she seems to be more intrigued with this place than almost any other in the narrative and she renders it in the most detail. The only other spaces in the text that receive as much attention are the houses in New York; her description of New York houses, however, is significantly different since that is a general description and the river house is a very specific description. This house, in other words, is the most highly developed particular space within the narrative and as such, we should look at it very carefully. Physically, she describes it as such:

> It was supported with shores enclosed with Clapboards, laid on lengthways, and so much asunder, that the Light came throu' every where; the doore tyed on wth a cord in the place of hinges; The floor the bear earth; no windows but such as the thin covering afforded, nor any furniture but a Bedd wth a glass Bottle hanging at the head on't; an earthan cupp, a small pewter Bason, a Bord wth sticks to stand on, instead of a table, and a block or two in the corner instead of chairs.

These details tell us quite a bit about the edifice itself. It is obviously a one bedroom structure which, depending on the interpretation of architectural history, could either

suggest poverty or that the house was of an early colonial design.[45] It is neither wainscotted nor insulated since the walls allow light to come through it. The door, window, and floor details obviously bespeak poverty, as do the details about the furniture and dishes (especially when considered in light of current probate inventories).

The house's family consists of an "old man, his wife, and two Children." In sum, this scene is "every part...the picture of poverty." As such, according to the class racist reading of the text, we should expect to find that Knight would judge the family rather harshly or to make them the victims of her sharp tongue, but this is not the case. Instead, Knight claims that in spite of these material signs of poverty, "both the Hutt and its Inhabitants were very clean and tydee: to the crossing the Old Proverb, that bare walls make giddy hows-wifes." Bush notes that giddy signifies frivolity and inattentiveness (see footnote 30), thus the lady of the house is conscientious and sober-minded, more of the ilk of the wife at Haven's Tavern than the other hostesses in the narrative. Furthermore, the term wretched, according to the OED could signify the "condition or character of being base or vile, odious or contemptible; despicableness, meanness, or badness," as Michaelsen seems to suggest, but it could also signify a "condition of discomfort or distress caused by privation, poverty, misfortune, adversity, or the like; great misery or unhappiness," a "state or condition of being mean, sorry, or paltry; inferiority, worthlessness," or "the fact or character of being uncomfortable." The word wretched, then, contained a wide range of possible meanings that varied in what we could call social consciousnesses, thus her use of the word "wretched" does not necessarily

[45] Morrison's history claims that colonists started building one-room dwellings, then developed the two-room design with a chimney in the middle, but more recent architectural historians such as Cummings, Andrews, and Ameri note that both designs were part of the Puritan colonial architectural vocabulary since both can be found in England dating back before the seventeenth century.

have to be pejorative. In fact, the scene prompts Knight to compose a poem that is quite consistent with religious principles of Protestant theology; the poem recounts the family's poverty, claiming "their ten thousand ills wch can't be told, / Makes nature er'e 'tis middle age'd look old" (9-10). The hardships these people must put up with, in other words, cause them to seem to age and suffer more than they ought to. Knight concludes the poem by confessing "When I reflect, my late fatigues do seem / Only a notion or forgotten Dreem" (11-12). This conclusion is far from class racist. The poet uses the scene to help herself reflect on her own immediate circumstances and finds her proverbial lot in life is really not so bad after all. This does not suggest Knight feels a kind of contentment with her life and situation, but it does suggest a realistic and humble understanding of her "blessed" state; as a matter of fact, she specifically states that she "Blest [herself]" that she was not a member of this family, that is she counted it a blessing not to be in this state. This kind of clear-minded recognition and appreciation of one's life situation is quite in keeping with both Lutheran and Calvinist theology, thus Knight's initial reaction to this episode arises *not* from a bourgeois world vision, but a distinctly Protestant, that is religious world vision.

Into this scene of poverty enters an "Indian-like animal" that Knight quite obviously despises. She notes with open disgust that he is "[raggedly]" dressed and shod when he enters the hut and lights a pipe of "black junk," which he "fell to sucking like a calf" (99-100). Other critics[46] refer to this humorous description in their claims that this scene carries a class racist undertone, conflating the Indian-like animal, the family, and the house. However, this conflation does not seem warranted, especially in light of the exchange between the old man and this more imposing figure, who sat with his pipe

[46] Michaelsen, Vowell, Balkun, and Stern, in particular.

"without speaking near a quarter of an hower" (100). After this period of silence, "the old man said how do's Sarah do? who I understood was the wretches wife, and Daughter to the old man." Thus, the Indian-like animal is a son-in-law of the old man and his wife, and if we consider the manner of his entrance and his reception, we may conclude he is not particularly well liked either; this conclusion can be supported by noting that Knight refers to him as a "wretch" (which, as noted earlier, did carry a negative tone), that she capitalizes "Daughter," and that she has just cast the family in a very positive, even quasi-religious, light. Thus, the Indian-like animal is an aberration within the space and not representative of the family at all.

What seems to make the episode all the more noteworthy, however, is that Knight actually makes a kind of connective gesture towards Sarah. To the son-in-law's unreported answer on his daughter's condition (this silence itself suggests Knight's disgust), the father responds that she seems to be "as well as can be expected, &c.," and Knight claims she "supposed [she] knew Sarah's case." This is one of the few times in the narrative when Knight makes any attempt to "connect" with a person in the text. She aligns herself with ministers, governors, and persons of prominence within the text,[47] but seems to consciously distance herself from commoners and their spaces. This, however is only one of two places in the text in which she breaks this pattern, the other of which is when she mentions that she "could have been content to live in" New Rochelle, Connecticut. True, this could be read as moment of *nobles oblige*, but it can also be interpreted as an action in keeping with an injunction often given by Puritan ministers to

[47] Specifically Rev. Gurdon Saltonstall of New London, Connecticut, Rev. James Pierpont and Gov. John Winthrop of New Haven, as well as her family in the city who seem to be of some standing, since she makes such a journey to help settle her cousin's estate and since she notes that one of her "Kinsmen" is a "Capt. Prout."

build communities that ignore class boundaries, as in this well-known passage from John Winthrop's sermon "A Modell of Christian Charity":

> ...wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affection, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together inall meekenes, gentlenes, patience, and liberallity, wee must delight in eache other, make others Condicions our owne rejoyce together, allwayes having before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body, soe shall we keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace. (42)

Given her earlier characterization of the house and of the family and the distinctly Protestant nature of her poem on them, her connecting with Sarah seems much more in keeping with the community ideal of the Puritan fathers than it does with the performance of some vague class notion, especially since a sense of *nobles oblige* does not enter into the text at any other time. In this episode, then, Knight symbolically performs a religious and moral prescribed by the Puritan fathers, thereby fulfilling an aspect of the Bay Colony's sacred commission.

HOMECOMING

On March 3, 1705, five months after her departure, Sarah Kemble Knight, finally arrived home safely in Boston to her "aged and tender mother" and her "Dear and only Child in good health with open arms" (116). Her arrival was, however, not merely a family event; indeed, it was a community event since she notes that her "Kind relations and friends [flocked] in to welcome [her] and hear the story of [her] transactions and travails." Despite the numerous unconventional passages of her narrative, Knight closes her account in a remarkably conventional fashion, desiring "sincerely to adore [her] Great Benefactor for thus graciously carying forth and returning in safety his unworthy handmaid." Other readings, notably Michealsen, Vowell, and Balkun, find this ending simply conventional, responding to narrative expectations, but if we consider the passage in a little more detail, we find it is more complex than these critics have deemed.

Those who consider this ending merely conventional seem to read this narrative no differently than consciously public texts such as Indian captivity narratives, conversion narratives, sermons, and histories. These narratives were deliberately generated to reify public, collective notions of religious deportment, social relationships, and historical sensibility. The preface to Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, for example calls attention to the "lessons" the story contains for its ostensibly religious audience, advising the reader to "peruse, ponder, and from hence lay up something from the experience of another...that so thou also through patience and consolation of the Scripture mayest have hope" (31). These narratives addressed audiences that were larger than their ring of acquaintances,[48] thus they were purely public documents.

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[48] Benedict Anderson contends that this sense of audience was one of the most significant markers of emerging national consciousnesses in the eighteenth century.

Knight's *Journal*, however, clearly names her audience when she writes that her family and friends all expected to "hear the story of [her] transactions and travails." Knight's narrative, then, responds to a different stimulus than other Puritan texts. Her audience had specific and known boundaries, rather than the general colonial or Puritan populations, thus we cannot evaluate it in the same way. A familiar audience, such as Knight's, has a more intimate relationship with the author, which in turn means that the author can take liberties in his or her narrative that may not be possible with larger, more impersonal audiences. Knight's family and friends, for example, had some understanding of Knight's personality, attitudes, consumptive behaviors, and religiosity, thus the author would be freer to "play" with these elements of her persona than if she were addressing a lager, unknown audience. To put it in terms of Weber's work, in writing for a known and limited audience, Knight had greater ability to "electively" adopt whatever strategies in her narrative that would allow her to compose her travels and encounters as she saw fit. This kind of freedom would allow Knight to juxtapose conservative, religious moments with more bourgeois observations and even humor, since her readers would have a kind of life-framework within which to understand Knight's unstable renditions of space, place, and people. Knight's familiar audience allowed her to have a religious experience in the Rhode Island forest, then write a classically influenced ode to the moon; to feel a sense of connection with a rural wife whom she had never meet, while in the presence of the impoverished, but unexpectedly clean river house, which emplaced both a "tydee" family and an "Indian-like Animal"; to praise one tavern and tavern owner, while severely ridiculing others, even though they had the same architecture and lay in similar proximity to established towns.

Understanding who the *Journal's* audience was can gives us a fuller understanding of the religious moments of the text, since the readers would have known what Knight's religious life was like. Although we may not be able to determine what her relationship to the church was before her trip, biographical details fleshed out by Sargent Bush Jr. indicate that she did have a real religious communal life afterwards, at least. Eight years after her journey, Knight's daughter, Elizabeth, was engaged to John Livingston of New London, Connecticut and when her future sisters-in-law questioned her reputation, John requested a character reference from Increase and Cotton Mather. The older Mather, at that time, was still the minister of Boston's Second Church, and must have provided a favorable reference for he also solemnized John and Elizabeth's wedding (73). In order to provide such a reference, we must conclude that the Knights were "active" participants, to some degree, in Mather's congregation and lived according to the expectations of the community well enough that Mather felt comfortable performing the ceremony. When we take these biographical details into account, her thoughts on her Call and the adoration she expresses for her "great Benefactor" seem more complicated than merely convention plot elements, since contemplation and gratitude lay at the heart of Puritan worship. We may never be able to fully determine whether Knigh's journey was itself a "converting" experience, whether she became more religious as a result of her great benefactor's protection during her travels, but we cannot simply dismiss her expressions of religious sentiment because she did indeed have some kind of religious life. It certainly seems that Knight may not have been as pious as a Mary Rowlandson or a Samuel Sewall, but that does not mean that she did not have a spiritual life.

Ultimately, Knight's narrative cannot tell us how devoutly she lived. It simply does not exhibit a spiritual life the way other Puritan narratives do. The text is steeped in the material details of everyday life, details of architecture, communal life, and rural landscapes, details which are caught in a nexus of perception and interpretation. It is a text marked by a clear process of negotiation between the emerging Boston bourgeois consciousness and a more traditional Puritan consciousness. What emerges in the narrative, is a world vision that electively shifts between these two mentalities, a process which may have been consciously employed, since Knight culled the narrative from entries in a travel diary, according to Theodore Dwight (85). *The Journal of Madame Knight* does indeed shed valuable light on the development of American culture and autobiography in the early eighteenth century, but it does so by dramatizing the dynamics of a particular Puritan's mind as she re-created the geography she encountered and perceived.

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VITA

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