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Seriality and Settlement:
Southworth, Lippard, and
*The Panorama of the Monumental
Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley*

*T*he Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the *Mississippi Valley* is about to return. When the Saint Louis Art Museum completes its restoration of the panorama, a piece of nineteenth-century ephemera will be on view in the museum's permanent collection galleries. Museum-goers are unlikely to encounter the panorama as ephemeral, however. Its massive scale—348 feet long and nearly 8 feet high—will inevitably suggest "monumental" ambitions meant to last. But as the only surviving moving panorama of the Mississippi River, once a popular theme for these visual spectacles, *Monumental Grandeur* represents a historical object that endures in the present against all odds. Painted on lightweight muslin to help them travel from town to town where they could be set up in large halls or even outdoors, many moving panoramas were ruined or lost rather than preserved.

While the Saint Louis Art Museum's exhibit will make a type of nineteenth-century entertainment available to contemporary viewers, in the nineteenth century, *Monumental Grandeur* brought an imagined North American past into the present. Commissioned by medical doctor and amateur archaeologist Montroville William Dickeson to accompany his traveling lecture and painted by John J. Egan, many of the panorama's twenty-five scenes depict historical events and images of exploration and archaeological excavation (see fig. 1). Dickeson spent the years from 1837 to 1844 traveling through the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys and had, according to the broadside printed to advertise his lecture, "opened over 1,000 Indian Monuments or Mounds," unearthing "a collection of 40,000 *relics* of those interesting but unhistoried Native Americans."[1] Part of nineteenth-century America's obsession

Figure 1   John J. Egan, *Ferguson Group; The Landing of Gen. Jackson*, scene eighteen from the *Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c.1850), distemper on cotton muslin, Saint Louis Art Museum, Eliza McMillan Trust, 34:1953

with "antiquities" and with using those antiquities to craft a history for the United States' expanding territory (a history that relied on representing Native Americans as "unhistoried"), the panorama itself is now being "excavated" and displayed, part of a twenty-first-century concern with the nation, temporality, and ruins.[2]

Of course, the Saint Louis Art Museum's visitors will not experience the panorama as a nineteenth-century viewer would have experienced it. A nineteenth-century viewer would have watched as the panels slowly moved across his or her field of vision while the long length of fabric was transferred from one vertical roller to another. At the same time, that viewer would have been guided through the visual experience by Dickeson's accompanying lecture. We do not know precisely what Dickeson said as the panorama moved from a view of the "Encamping Grounds of Lewis and Clark" to the scene of the "Tornado of 1844," from the "Extermination of the French in 1729" to "De Soto's Burial at White Cliffs." Most American moving panoramas relied on the conceit of travel through a landscape, offering a sense of movement across time and space that replicated movement westward, and most strove to depict contemporary events and new places.[3] The Egan-Dickeson panorama presents a different vision. Individual scenes conflate temporal periods, and the panorama as a whole layers multiple histories. While it would have unrolled before its viewers in one long

length of fabric, the panorama would have appeared as a series of episodes given coherence primarily through Dickeson's narrative.

Today, the only way to see the panorama move as it once might have is digitally.[4] When it is installed in the Saint Louis Art Museum's galleries, the panorama will be mounted on a specially designed frame similar to ones used in the nineteenth century, but it will not move. Visitors will see just one fourteen-by-eight-foot scene, and that scene will change periodically, creating a new speed—an alternative temporality—for the panorama. Able to see only one scene at a time, today's museum visitor will be faced with a visual challenge that will also be a narrative and imaginative challenge.

While museum visitors will experience the Egan-Dickeson panorama's visual "grandeur" without Dickeson's accompanying narration, emerging visual technologies like the panorama informed the production of other types of nineteenth-century narratives that are still in existence. Fiction by popular authors such as George Lippard and E.D.E.N. Southworth is often intensely visual, making looking central to its sensational aesthetic.[5] In Lippard's novels, for example, the reader "looks" upon the bare shoulders and heaving bosoms of female forms positioned within ekphrastic tableaux, becoming a voyeur even as he or she is made uncomfortably aware of that voyeurism. At other moments, as in *The Quaker City*'s (1845) "Devil-Bug's Dream," the visual aesthetic is less intimate and more sweeping in its scope as the reader is confronted with a gala-day procession, with images of stars dancing in the sky, graves opening, and a river filled with floating coffins and corpses. Another Lippard novel, *Legends of Mexico* (1847), engages with the visual aesthetic of "war pictures that were staged as panoramas in theaters, reprinted as illustrations in papers, and sold on the street as popular prints" (Streeby 2002, 67). Offering "bird's-eye views of battlefields and military lines," writes Shelley Streeby, Lippard blurs lines "between an evil Spanish and a benign U.S. conquest" of Mexico (2002, 67, 68). Merging popular visual entertainment with popular fiction in order to advance critiques of capitalism and antebellum society, fiction like Lippard's serves as a reminder of the dynamic relationships between visual and print culture in the middle of the nineteenth century.

In what follows I examine engagements with the visual in Lippard's *'Bel of Prairie Eden* (1848) and E.D.E.N. Southworth's *The Hidden Hand or, Capitola the Madcap* (1859). More significant, I consider narrative

moments that evoke visual representation within the context of the formal rupture and recurrence that defines these popular serialized novels and *Monumental Grandeur*. I argue that the serial structures and temporalities of these particular works and the narrative forms of recursion and repetition that result produce an aesthetic engagement with the past that emphasizes simultaneity and overlap rather than any kind of linear temporality. Narrative recurrence is replicated in and distilled into moments that describe looking over landscapes or into hidden pits—views that make multiple temporalities simultaneous. In the case of the panorama, such recurrence is made simultaneous in individual scenes that depict multiple temporalities.

Ostensibly linear forms consisting of sequential "numbers"—whether individual panorama scenes or serial installments—the works that I discuss are, in fact, anything but sequential in a narrative sense. Nineteenth-century serial fiction is notoriously unwieldy. Chapters end abruptly in what would later come to be called "cliffhangers." New chapters begin just as abruptly, dropping the reader into unexpected, unfamiliar times or places. Characters disappear and suddenly reappear, as readers, like the viewers of *Monumental Grandeur*, are transported from one scene to another over the variable spaces and times between installments, chapters, or sections of painted muslin.[6] And these particular works reorient the histories that we tell about the temporalities of such texts and objects themselves. *The Hidden Hand*, for example, was published serially three times (in the United States alone) before being published in book form. *Monumental Grandeur* is being made available to the public again after years in storage. Works characterized by narrative repetition and recurrence themselves "recur" in various ways.

My attention to heterogeneous temporalities and to narrative recurrence is grounded in images of land—of layered landscapes—in the works I discuss. Images of Indian burial mounds or pits of bones, as well as panoramic visions of historical overlap that collapse events over centuries, make land the site of multiple temporalities within works characterized by the temporal fragmentation and multiplicity of seriality. Emphasizing the presence of multiple temporalities as they are represented in landscapes and topographies within popular fiction frequently read in relation to issues of empire surrounding the US-Mexico war, I refocus attention on broader discourses of settler colonialism that often fall out of consideration. I argue that attending to the recur-

rence embedded in the ostensibly linear forms of these works, and to images in which they confront the US settlement of lands that contain other histories of imperial violence and settlement, helps us recognize articulations of settler colonialism not merely as "forgetting" (forgetting previous claims on space, for example) to be combatted with the "hauntings" or "remembering" of postcolonial approaches, but as various, ongoing processes of "in-betweenness" (See Watts 2010, 464).

Edward Watts (2010) has recently discussed "settler postcolonialism as a reading strategy" that would acknowledge the complex relationships of settlers to land and landscapes in the US context, to indigenous peoples, and to the process of constructing narratives of belonging in spaces that others already call home.[7] Such a reading strategy might also consider how various material forms and the narrative forms that result, in this case the sensational repetition of midcentury popular fiction and visual culture, engage these ongoing processes. In these works, the repetitious violence of settlement is expressed through a topographic multiplicity in which contemporary moments of violence are copresent with past moments. And that repetition is simultaneously expressed through the very structure of these works. If, as Lorenzo Veracini (2010, 96–98) claims, the narrative form of colonialism is a circular narrative of return and the idealized narrative of colonial settlement is linear (settler colonials "come to stay"), the serial structures of the works that I consider complicate that binary, showing settlement to in fact be repetitious, persistently unsettled, and always multiple, even as it imagines and is structured by linearity. Reading popular fiction like Lippard's and Southworth's and visual material like *Monumental Grandeur* for how it depicts the recurrence and copresence of temporalities alerts us to the narrative forms of settlement, and reminds us of earlier efforts to narrate the multiple histories of settler space.

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George Lippard's *'Bel of Prairie Eden*, published in the Boston weekly *Uncle Sam* before being published by Boston's Hotchkiss and Company, contains both scenes of intimate, invasive looking and sweeping panoramic visions as it, in typical Lippard fashion, makes female bodies metonyms for political and social conflicts, in this case conflicts regarding land.[8] Set in Texas and Mexico in the years surrounding the United States' annexation of Texas in 1845, the novel is structured by

acts of revenge between two warring families, one Mexican and one
American. The Grywin family has moved into the newly formed Repub-
lic of Texas following the collapse of their Philadelphia bank. Years ear-
lier the eponymous Isabel Grywin had refused Don Antonio Marin's
suit when he was the "attaché of the Mexican legation, at Washington"
(Lippard 1848, 21). Don Antonio seeks revenge for this slight at the
same time that Mexico seeks to reclaim Texas in 1842. Invading the
Grywin family's idyllic Texas homestead, Prairie Eden, Don Antonio
drugs 'Bel (and coerces her into exchanging her body for her father's
life), hangs her father anyway, and later kills her younger brother.
'Bel's older brother John spends five years seeking revenge for these
atrocities, eventually killing Don Antonio's father and wooing his sis-
ter Isora, whose honor he plans to ruin as Don Antonio had ruined
'Bel's. At the same time, John tells Isora of the wrongs done to his fam-
ily, withholding the identity of his enemy so that she, unwittingly,
comes to despise her own brother. The sensational repetition of viola-
tion and murder is explicit, muddling the novel's stance on the territo-
rial ambitions of these warring families. While Don Antonio is clearly
evil, John replicates his wrongs. Although Lippard himself generally
supported US war efforts and championed expansion into western
lands as a way to provide opportunities for the white working classes,
'Bel of Prairie Eden takes a more ambivalent stance toward the war
than many of his other writings. In *'Bel*, as Streeby (2002, 73) puts it,
Lippard's "utopia for redeemed labor becomes a haunted homestead in
the Texas borderlands."

  The novel shifts abruptly between scenes set in Texas and in Mexico
as it moves backward and forward in time over the course of its chap-
ters. In one of its climactic moments, Don Antonio and John Grywin
meet in Mexico years after the violence at Prairie Eden. Don Antonio
has forced his way through his sister's bedchamber in pursuit of the
American "spy" (John) that she has been sheltering, and he emerges
onto the roof of his "paternal mansion" to confront his enemy. This
action begins a two-chapter panoramic vision of historical conjuncture
that the reader has been prepared for by the novel's very first sentence,
spoken to John by his younger brother: "Come, brother, it is a beautiful
view—look yonder" and by occasional mention of the "hazy line of the
horizon" on the Texas prairie (Lippard 1848, 7, 14).[9] The reader has
been taught to look over the landscape from the beginning. As Don
Antonio steps onto the roof, John grabs his arm, instructing him to

"'Remember . . . and look yonder!,'" yoking the past and seeing. "The monk [Don Antonio] beheld the sight which spread before him," the narrative continues. "It was a sight to swell the heart with a vague yet overwhelming sense of the sublime. Let us stand beside him on the roof of the mansion which overlooks the main square of the town, and gaze upon the vision which he beheld and feel its dusk sublimity rush thro' the eyesight to our souls" (Lippard 1848, 33).

John, Don Antonio, and reader survey Vera Cruz from above. Describing the view in each direction at a pregnant moment when history is about to happen, these chapters simultaneously tell the story of an earlier history. They use the space of the city and the landscape beyond to convey a sense of historical repetition immediately evident in the epigraphs to these two chapters: "Winfield Scott in the footsteps of Cortes" and "In order to estimate the present we must look upon the past. 'I will tell you,' said the veteran, 'a story of the days of old, in order that you may understand that which I have to state of,—the ninth of March, 1847'" (Lippard 1848, 34; 40).

As the men stand on the roof, Scott and his men arrive. "The hardy children of the North" heroically enact American triumph (Lippard 1848, 36). Yet, as in Lippard's other Mexican war novels, the reader is reminded that this glorious conquest occurs in a landscape bearing traces of past conquests, a fact made clear in the second paragraph of this two-chapter "panorama" when the reader's gaze is brought "toward the east" where "waves break in low murmurs against the barren Isle of Sacrificios, barren to the sight, yet bearing in its bosom mysterious chambers, stored with relics of six hundred years ago" (Lippard 1848, 34). Imagining the same landscape during the height of the Aztec empire, the panoramic history depicts the Aztecs as "a wondrous people" dwelling "amid gorgeous cities," but it also depicts "horrible altars" and "a despotic government," emphasizing difference as swiftly as it had imagined connections over time (Lippard 1848, 38; 39). What follows is a scene in which Cortés convinces his men to help him conquer the same land being conquered by Scott in 1847. Cortés's actions are depicted as less vigorous and more fraught than Scott's, giving a sense of primacy and righteousness to the American cause, yet the two events are nevertheless collapsed as the view from the roof portrays spatial and temporal conjuncture across centuries.

This sense of conjuncture continues as the novel's action moves down into the ground, into the "subterranean chambers" where the

"bloody rites" of "300 years ago" are repeated in John's "conquest" of Isora and in Don Antonio's death (Lippard 1848, 56, 57). In these scenes, as Shirley Samuels (2004, 35) suggests, "looking and witnessing" is a "form of violence." The violence associated with looking here recasts the work of the panoramic gaze proffered in earlier chapters, a reminder of the role of looking in claiming land. From the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" gaze of the explorer to the maps of colonial surveyors, visual claims on landscapes facilitate acts of appropriation, even as those claims are always incomplete and impacted by other visual and spatial paradigms.[10] In 'Bel of Prairie Eden, various topographies, from towering mountains to gothic chambers, become sites that contain multiple histories of violence, if not multiple perspectives, associated with the claim of the gaze.

Compressing moments of conquest separated by hundreds of years into one view, Lippard presents a vision of what Jesse Alemán calls "'Inter' Americanism." Reading histories and historical romances that deal with US-Mexico relations, Alemán (2008, 79) argues that texts like Robert Montgomery Bird's *Calavar* (1834), which begins with a Mexican curate's "palimpsest map" history, show "that the nations of the western hemisphere already contain *within* ("intra") their borders national others whose formative presence is subsequently buried (interred) but nonetheless felt and often expressed through gothic discourse." "One Cortés is the same as the other in the hemisphere's haunting history of conquest," he concludes (92). While 'Bel functions similarly, emphasizing the text's structural and aesthetic qualities—its seriality—shifts attention from discourses of gothic repression and haunting to how such fiction, for all its engagement with stereotypical gothic imagery, puts the very process of confronting the other that is the self out in the open.

Rather than interring the other within the self or the past within the present in a way that haunts, the narrative foregrounds its recursions. As 'Bel moves from Prairie Eden to Vera Cruz to Philadelphia it draws attention to this movement, and to the narrative labor required to make sense of it and to acknowledge the copresence of multiple geographies and temporalities. For example, anticipating complaints about the narrative's sudden movements, and perhaps responding to critiques of installments that had already appeared, Lippard emphasizes the text's geographic and temporal mobility before highlighting its narrative mobility: "I hear the snarl of the critic, and thus he barks,—'Here's a

pretty transition—from the Aztec vault of Vera Cruz to a Philadelphia theater! Horrible! Here we have a story commencing on the prairies of Texas, suddenly dashing away to a desolate rancho in the heart of Mexico, then to Vera Cruz and the vaults of Sacrificios, and last of all to a Philadelphia theater!' . . . . Call this digression a preface to my story, if you please, and I will explain" (Lippard 1848, 72, 73). Reminding readers of the various geographies the narrative has visited over the course of previous chapters, the narrative folds over on itself here as an ending "digression" is said to provide a beginning.

In fact, *'Bel* begins with an ending as well. The second chapter starts with a "lone Indian" standing on the summit of a mound, glaring "with an immovable gaze over the glorious view." Here the prairies with "their boundless view, their vast horizon," their mounds topped with aged trees "massive as blocks of granite, and encrusted with the thick bark, that had been hardening for centuries" are also sites of layers of history emphasized in the "rugged rind of the ancient oaken trees" (Lippard 1848, 14). "Before this knoll itself was reared, as the grave of warriors, Red Men were upon this soil, the Kings, the Prophets of their people," the Indian speaks aloud in his "rude . . . tongue." "Where are they now?" he continues. "The bones of the mighty men rest in the bosom of this knoll—but their children, where are they? Look for them far away by the great Salt Lake, in the land of the setting sun!" (Lippard 1848, 15). In a standard evocation of Manifest Destiny, "White civilization" comes from the east with "banners and bayonets," and the Indians move west in advance of them, leaving "that prairie of the wilderness . . . to solitude and God" (15). The mound of Indian bones on which the mansion of Prairie Eden will be erected in the grove of ancient trees—the house in which 'Bel will be "ruined," the trees on which her father will be hanged—is, in this moment, another reminder of the other within. It is another figure of conjuncture that coexists with and counters an image of linearity and "Progress." And when readers step onto the roof in Vera Cruz with John and Don Antonio to witness both Cortés and Scott conquer Mexico, when they watch Don Antonio watching Isora's ruin in the subterranean chambers of the vaults of Sacrificios, or watch Isora unwittingly watching Don Antonio die, the narrative also implicitly returns to this scene, where the reader watches the living Indian watch the future approach as he stands upon the past.

This recursive narrative structure, a structure facilitated by serial publication, merges concerns with the repetitious imperial actions

leading up to 1848 with representations of settlement, which is itself
always structured by repetition. The Grywin's occupation of a knoll
comprised of Indian bones and Cortés's occupation of Aztec space, Don
Antonio's occupation of Prairie Eden, and Scott's occupation of Vera
Cruz all overlap through the narrative's movements. And while *'Bel*
does not explicitly engage with the "simultaneity" of the settler subject
in the way that a novel like Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly*—
with its attention to Edgar's confused, questioning interiority—does,
there is a sense in which *'Bel*'s repetitious violence captures a similar
sense of "in-betweenness" (See Watts 2010, 462, 464). As Edgar wan-
ders through a wild, unfamiliar landscape encountering one Lenni
Lenape after another, he becomes the "serial" killer that Robert Mont-
gomery Bird would later depict in *Nick of the Woods.* He enacts the very
violence that he seeks to revenge, showing that, as Jared Gardner (1994,
453) puts it, "to be an American is to be almost always an Indian, almost
a European."[11] Similarly, in *'Bel*, to occupy land is to displace others and
to risk being displaced, and the relationships between indigenous peo-
ples and settlers, and between colonizing forces, are played out in a way
that emphasizes that violence done to others returns as violence to the
self. While Lippard is certainly not writing literature of settlement in
the same way that someone like Brown, Bird, or John Neal did (after all,
a work like *'Bel* is primarily concerned with territory as it relates to the
conflict with Mexico and is not at all concerned with England as metro-
pole), through moments of ekphrastic conjuncture and through its rep-
etitious form, *'Bel* highlights the doubleness of America as a settler
nation grounded, as Aziz Rana (2010) has recently emphasized, in an
ideal of freedom inseparable from the subordination of marginalized
groups, portraying "'Inter' Americanism" of many kinds.[12]

In this sense, attention to visions of the coexistence of histories within
such antebellum texts might complement Mark Rifkin's (2009, 6) explo-
ration of the "double movement" of "the imperial structure of U.S. juris-
diction prior to the Civil War . . . recoding land formerly beyond the pur-
view of U.S. governance as intimately embedded in national space; and
producing subjectivities for involuntarily interiorized peoples that are
designed to testify to their non-coerced acceptance of their place in
national life." Rifkin (2009, 22) suggests that "starting from the premise
of self-determination would emphasize the co-presence of discrepant,
and perhaps incommensurate, geographies 'within' the United States,
foregrounding the conflict among various conceptualizations of space,

the resulting complex overlay of collective territorialities, and the ways U.S. policy has worked to play those various geopolitical claims against each other to delegitimize and legally disavow them." His attention to the writings of internalized populations in the Southeast and old Northwest, as well as in the territories that would become Texas and California, serves as a reminder of multiple discourses of erasure and belonging deployed across multiple geographies, making the fundamental (il) logic of settlement the basis of national space.

Taken together, the governmental documents and nonfictional writing that Rifkin discusses and texts like *'Bel*, which bear the traces of processes of dispossession and settlement and enact those processes in broad strokes through their dramatic scenes and recursive forms, might help us to see how political and governmental discourses and narratives of belonging, as well as fictions that confront narratives of belonging, are always unstable in the settler nation, as in earlier "colonial" periods. They might help us to recognize not only how "national territoriality remains haunted by geopolitical formations absorbed but not entirely eliminated," but also how processes of incomplete erasure are scripted into the very forms of popular antebellum texts and images.

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Six years after *'Bel of Prairie Eden* was published and shortly after George Lippard died, Henry Peterson, editor of the *Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post*, warned E.D.E.N. Southworth of the dangers of writing sensational tales, explicitly comparing her to Lippard.[13] Peterson's tense editorial relationship with Southworth would soon be over, however. She was being pursued by Robert Bonner, and beginning in 1857, she had an exclusive contract with his *New York Ledger*, a relationship that would last for decades and make her name synonymous with seriality as well as sensation.

The Hidden Hand was published serially in the *New York Ledger* beginning on February 5, 1859. Its publication was anticipated in ads in papers ranging from the *Lowell (MA) Daily Citizen and News* (January 22, 1859) to the *Charlestown (SC) Mercury* (January 24, 1859). Once the novel began to appear in the *Ledger*, excerpts were printed in papers ranging from the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* (February 7 and 8) to the (Columbus) *Ohio Daily Statesman* (February 8 and 9), from the *National Era* (February 10 and 17) to the *Milwaukee (WI) Daily Sentinel* (February 14 and 15) so that readers of those papers would become

invested in the story and seek out the *New York Ledger.* While the intention of these excerpts was to draw readers back to a New York–based popular story paper with the financial ability to contract an increasingly popular author, their appearance in various papers creates a geographic dynamism to the movement of the text itself that echoes the geographic movement described within the text. Through ads and excerpts, the novel repeated itself as it rolled across the country.

The Hidden Hand also uniquely highlights the recurrence of the serial form since it appeared serially in the *Ledger* again in 1868 and in 1883 before it was published in its entirety. The work itself recurred in the same venue at different moments in time. While most essays on the novel mention its publication history, few reflect on the implications: for the first twenty-nine years of the novel's existence, readers were only able to encounter it in fragments and, unless someone saved each copy of the *Ledger* in which chapters appeared so that it could be read sequentially in its entirety, readers would have to wait a week for the suspenseful ending of one "number" to be resolved in the next.[14] Reappearing at different times over the course of decades, embedded in a story paper alongside various essays, articles, and announcements, the novel itself exists within multiple, heterogeneous temporalities even as it, like *'Bel of Prairie Eden,* like *Monumental Grandeur*, is characterized by a narrative aesthetic of fragmentation and recurrence that depicts multiple temporalities.

Best known for its plucky heroine, Capitola, whose spirited escapades made the novel an obvious choice for the twentieth-century recovery of nineteenth-century texts by popular female authors, *The Hidden Hand* has been read as a protofeminist text and for its engagement with US empire. As the narrative itself moved around the country (and to England), the novel's action moves between a Virginia plantation and the streets of New York, as well as through Washington DC, Baltimore, St. Louis, Mexico, and New Orleans, suggesting a dynamic engagement with hemispheric circuits. Temporally, it moves from an early land grab to the US-Mexican War and back again, suggesting provocative relationships between colonial and imperial moments.

One of the novel's most memorable images, a dark pit beneath the heroine's bedroom, epitomizes this sense of relationality, gathering the spatial and temporal movement of the novel's many chapters into an image that simultaneously invokes dispossessed Indian warriors, well-

known stories of frontier violence, and unsettling images of the Virginia landscape like the excavation of an Indian burial mound described in Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781). The pit, beneath a room belonging to the part of the house "that dates back to the first settlement of the country," is said to have been "a trap for the Indians" that Capitola's ancestor Henri Le Noir killed when those Indians opposed his plan to buy a large tract of land (Southworth 1988, 73). According to this legend, the murdered warriors' sons later took revenge on the settler family, killing and scalping them and dropping their bodies down the trapdoor into the mysterious pit that the mansion's current housekeeper describes as "nothing but a great, black, deep vacuity, without bottom or sides" (Southworth 1988, 73). Layers of bodies, of history, of conflict, are said to lie beneath Capitola's sleeping space.

At one point, Capitola saves herself from the novel's villain, Black Donald, by dropping him into the hole. As Amy Kaplan (2002, 50) points out, the heroine "reenacts" and "repeats" the "founding gesture of imperial violence to protect the borders of her domestic empire and the inviolability of the female body." In Kaplan's terms, Capitola's action is indicative of how nineteenth-century empire is perpetuated and enabled at home and abroad, within the domestic sphere of the home and nation as well as externally. In another sense, Capitola's action repeats cycles of violence and revenge associated with "domestic" settlement that, as in *'Bel of Prairie Eden*, blur lines between oppressiveness and oppression. At once victim and agent of violence, at once a beneficiary of the dispossession represented by the trapdoor and the pit and in danger of being dispossessed herself, Capitola is figured as in-between. She is colonizer and colonized—a female embodiment of the recurrence of settlement.

Immediately following the chapters in which Black Donald falls into the trap, the narrative moves to General Scott's invasion of "the city of Mexico," bringing issues of land and belonging into the novel's present in a way that is directly linked to the conjuncture of history, land, and bodies associated with the pit. By this point, the reader has already been introduced to a critique of the US-Mexico War since, chapters earlier, two characters unexpectedly meet in New Orleans and discover that they are both going to war. "What had I to do with invading another's country?" one asks the other, "enlisting for a war of the rights and wrongs of which I know no more than anybody else does!" (Southworth 1988, 345).

When the narrative returns to Mexico and the war following Capi-
tola's "conquering" of Black Donald, it returns to a particular histori-
cal time and place: "that period of suspense and of false truce, between
the glorious 20th of August, and the equally glorious 8th of Septem-
ber, 1847—between the two most brilliant actions of the war, the battle
of Churubusco and the storming of Chapultepec" (Southworth 1988,
401). As María DeGuzmán (2005, 88–89) points out in her discussion of
Emanuel Leutze's 1848 painting *The Storming of the Teocalli Temple by
Cortez and His Troops*, the storming of Chapultepec became "the iconic
symbol of the eventual occupation of Mexico City . . . by U.S. troops. . . .
The hill had once been the site of an Aztec palace destroyed in the Span-
ish Conquest. In its place the Spanish viceroys had built a summer pal-
ace that, with Mexican independence, had been taken over by the
Republic of Mexico as the site of the Mexican Military College."
DeGuzmán shows that Leutze's painting "condenses time and place,
the 'storming of the Teocalli Temple' by Hernán Cortés and his men and
the 'storming of the Castle of Chapultepec' by the United States" in
order to "displace U.S. territorial ambitions and violent expansionist tac-
tics . . . onto colonial encounter between Spaniards and Aztecs" (89, 90).

In focusing on this iconic moment, collapsing the Spanish conquest of
Aztecs with the US conquest of Mexico, Southworth, like Leutze, like
Lippard, invokes a sense of conjoined pasts and presents also suggested
in the image of the pit beneath Capitola's bedroom. "The General-in-
chief of the United States forces in Mexico was at his headquarters in
the archiepiscopal palace of Tacubaya, on the suburbs, or in the full
sight of the city of the Montezumas," Southworth states, placing US
invaders atop Spanish atop Aztec, a sense of spatial and temporal layer-
ing that continues in the description of the setting for a character's
court martial: "Within a lofty apartment of the building, which was
probably at one time the great dining-hall of the priests, were collected
some twenty persons, comprising the court martial and its attendants"
(Southworth 1988, 401, 413). Repurposing a formerly sacred space for
a military tribunal, these men can be seen to rewrite the history of a
specific place much as they seek to rewrite the story of a larger terri-
tory. Given Southworth's explicit critique of the war in *The Hidden
Hand*, this layering seems not so much a displacement of US territo-
rial ambitions onto a Spanish "other" as an alignment of two powers
across the centuries. Time separates two different "stormings" of this

space, yet that temporal distance is collapsed in the narrative space of the serialized novel, allowing Southworth to again yoke past and present violence. Black Donald's fall into the pit of Indian bones brings readers to Mexico and to other histories of dispossession as they navigate the novel's disjointed episodes. The sensational scene of attempted rape in Capitola's bedroom looks out onto other fields of battle, as the panorama accessed through a door in Isora's bedroom provides a layered historical vision in Lippard's novel.

If *The Hidden Hand*'s Mexican War scenes invoke sights of landscapes and battles that might have been familiar from paintings, prints, illustrations, and panoramas, the pit of bones connecting settler violence in Virginia to sixteenth- and nineteenth-century imperial violence in Mexico depicts temporal heterogeneity at the same time that it renders that heterogeneity persistently illegible. As Capitola and her housemaid Pitipat peer into the "awful black void," Capitola proclaims that she will "lay every ghost" that Pitipat sees. But reaching a light into the abyss "only made the horrible darkness 'visible'" (Southworth 1988, 76). Peering down into the pit of the past brings not clarity, but opacity and darkness, a reminder of the difficulty of disentangling histories within the landscape.

■ ■ ■

Serialized novels like *The Hidden Hand* have usually been considered in terms of the whole published novel rather than in terms of their constituent, serial parts. In the case of *The Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley*, on the other hand, one part has often stood in for the whole. One particular scene has appeared in an exhibition and served as the image for a book cover.[15] That scene depicts the excavation of a barrow, or Indian burial mound, foregrounding the act of looking and layers of the past. In this image the mound is depicted in cross-section, its strata evoking Thomas Jefferson's famous description of his own excavation, its depiction as a "knoll" of bones echoing the lament of Lippard's lone Indian. The layers of skeletons within the mound suggest an orderly representation of time that seems to give structure where Capitola's pit offers "horrible darkness"—a representation complicated by the skeleton seated in a vertical pit at the top of the mound (see figs. 2 and 3). The orderly positioning of the intact skeletons stands in contrast to the scattered bones shown at the base of the mound and

Figure 2 John J. Egan, *Huge Mound and the Manner of Opening Them*, scene twenty from the *Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c. 1850)

Figure 3 Detail, *Huge Mound and the Manner of Opening Them*, scene twenty from the *Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c. 1850)

Figure 4   Detail, *Huge Mound and the Manner of Opening Them*, scene twenty from the *Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c. 1850)

the jumble of bones wedged into a large clay pot. The shift in visual perspective in the depiction of the mound's base, which is viewed as if from above rather than from the side, adds to the scene's sense of uncomfortable disruption. This imposition of multiple perspectives in one view visualizes challenges to representation and, by extension, to understanding the scene. Resisting easy depiction, requiring multiple vantage points, the barrow pushes back against illustrator and viewer.

That double perspective is echoed in the temporal multiplicity suggested by the living Indians in the lower right hand corner, where two "tepees" reproduce the shape of the mound in miniature (see fig. 4). The arches of the dark tent openings in particular evoke the cross-section interior of the barrow, linking the spaces of the living and the departed, or suggesting that the living will soon be departed. Yet one Indian woman holds an infant in her arms, an image of life and of futurity that stands in distinct contrast to the skeletons—the only other figures in the scene lying down.

The cluster of living Indians in front of the tents is itself echoed by the cluster of well-dressed white onlookers in the distance. Partly obscured by the dirt of the mound, these tourists are barely part of the scene, yet one of those figures manages to provide a focal point. Only two of the women face the mound and the viewer, but one of those women stands directly forward, ostensibly listening to the woman in white on her left (whose draped shawl inverts the arch of the mound and tents, echoing the visual "V" in which the tourists are situated). Viewed from the front, this woman seems to reflect the viewer's gaze directly. In a broadside advertising Dickeson's lecture, the panorama is referred to as "a most magnificent *Scenic Mirror*."[16] As the only figure in the scene who is looking directly forward, that woman momentarily suggests a personal rather than a "scenic" mirror, forging a link with the viewer—a link that is white and feminine and that continues Lippard and Southworth's work of collapsing female bodies and land.

The other figures in the group of tourists face the picturesque view in the distance, contemplating willows, water, mounds, and mountains. One man gestures toward the scene before them, drawing the viewer's gaze into the landscape beyond and suggesting an engagement with the natural scene rather than with the archeological excavation behind him. In contrast to the reaching black-suited arm of the presumably white male tourist, the black arms of the African American men in the foreground engage in the labor of excavation. Each is depicted in motion, digging with shovels, swinging pickaxes. Only the man at the far right of the mound rests his hands on the handle of his tool in a moment of stillness (see fig. 5). The racial division within the image is clear. African American men work to unearth Indian bones at the direction of white "scientists" like Dickeson, shown at the center of the mound's base. Wielding paper and pencil, Dickeson and two colleagues record and diagram their findings, seeking to make the human past of the landscape known.[17]

As a single image, this panel condenses layers of the "unhistoried" history of US space with the present, African American labor with Indian bones, white female spectatorship with African American labor and Indian bones, and the "unhistoried" past with a pastoral future held open to the viewer by the arm of the suited man wedged between mound and tent. But as one scene in a moving panorama composed of many different scenes, the image is also part of a broader condensing of geographical space and historical time. While some have traced a narrative of European settlement and of the demise of native popu-

Figure 5   Detail, *Huge Mound and the Manner of Opening Them*, scene twenty from the *Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c. 1850)

lations through the panorama's scenes, multiple temporalities exist within individual scenes.[18] And at any given moment the panorama conjures various pasts and projects possible futures as the linear scroll of muslin unrolls before its viewers, each scene discrete, yet also merging visually with those that come before and after (see figs. 6a and 6b).

This sense of simultaneous linearity and overlap or recurrence is also evident in the broadside that advertised the panorama and lecture. On the broadside the panorama is divided into three sections suggesting the possibility of thematic coherence, but such coherence is not easily discernible. Here the panorama's images become strings of words and dashes that a reader can encounter linearly as descriptive writing, or vertically, as overlapping "sections" that place "Walls," "Chiefs," and a "Stalagmitic Chamber" on "Rocky Mountains," a "Louisiana Squatter pursued by Wolves," and "The Landing of Gen. Jackson." The "15,000 feet of canvas!" that the broadside advertises becomes a textual list that piles images one on top of the other. And the sense of recurrence evident in the panorama itself, which is unrolled in one direction only to be unrolled in the other in order to return to

Figures 6a and 6b   Scenes 2–4 and scenes 9–11 of John J. Egan, *The Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c. 1850)

the beginning, the sense of recurrence evident in the broadside that advertises many different walls, caves, and battles, is reinforced in the recurrence of performances advertised at the bottom of the broadside. "Exhibition to commence at 8 every evening, and at 3 o'clock every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon," it promises. Dickeson's performance would take place over and over again (see fig. 7).

Angela Miller convincingly positions this panorama (painted approximately two years after Lippard's *'Bel of Prairie Eden* appeared and two years after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo) within the context of midnineteenth-century "historical anxieties centering on America's imperial identity during the period of its most rapid territorial expansion" and, more specifically, anxieties about the rise and fall of pre-European civilizations in the Americas—civilizations that could be used to justify contemporary imperial ambitions or that might challenge those ambi-

tions (Miller 1994, 9). The Mound Builder myth, for example, posited an earlier, peaceful, agrarian civilization that had been, it was said, supplanted by contemporary, nomadic Indian peoples. Since, according to this myth, present-day Indians were not the original inhabitants of the land, America's Indian removal policies could be justified. America was only doing to Indians what they had done to others. But this idea of past empires lost to history, an idea reinforced by archeological discoveries in Central and South America, also had the potential to destabilize the notion of America's exceptional promise. Was America merely part of the inevitable rise and fall of nations and empires? Would it too eventually fail?

As Miller points out, the (pseudo)archeological focus of much of the Egan-Dickeson panorama puts it in conversation with such ideas about cycles of empire, about cycles of history. (One thinks of Thomas Cole's series *The Course of Empire* [1833–36].) The panorama does not seem to completely separate contemporary Indians from a past
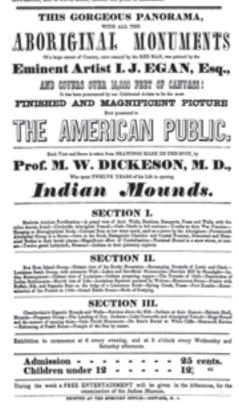
Figure 7 Broadside advertising the *Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley*. Image courtesy of the Penn Museum, image 143336.

Figure 8   John J. Egan, *Blank Scene*, scene twenty-five from *the Panorama of the Monumental Grandeur of the Mississippi Valley* (c. 1850)

"Mound Builder" culture, however. Miller notes that the advertisement for the lecture and panorama "refers to 'Indian mounds,' 'aboriginal monuments,' and 'antiquities and customs of the unhistoried Indian tribes,'" denying Indian peoples a history while simultaneously and paradoxically linking mounds and monuments to Indians. Yet, Miller (1994, 19) continues, "there *is* a sharp historical division between a monumental past and a present whose achievements appear distinctly minor" within the panorama. Contemporary Indians look back on a distant past within the panorama's scenes, or are positioned somehow next to, but separate from, that past, as in the scene of the excavation of the burial mound. A kind of degeneration seems implicit, and the land lies in wait for a new empire that has not yet arrived— a future implied by the arm of the tourist gesturing toward the horizon. But that future never appears within the panorama. Indeed, the twenty-fifth scene is blank, unfinished. Even though the panorama as a whole refuses a sense of linear, narrative progress, the final blank scene still manages to suggest the potential of a future that cannot yet be depicted (see fig. 8). Alternatively, given the panorama's geographic and temporal recursivity, given its lack of a clear master narrative, that final blank scene also suggests the difficulty of depicting the past, present, and an imagined future. Only five panels after the image of the burial mound in cross-section, the white of the muslin offers another challenge of possibility and unrepresentability. If the image of the mound sought to make multiple layers of the past available to

the eye in a single moment, the blank scene might conjure not absence, but the ultimate heterogeneity—all panels, all times, at once.

■ ■ ■

Southworth's Capitola finds that reaching a light into the abyss "only made the horrible darkness 'visible'" (Southworth 1988, 76). The Egan-Dickeson panorama, on the other hand, strives to make the North American continent's past, its *"Mounds, Tumulii, Fossa, &c.,"* its "Geology, Mineralogy and Botany," available to viewers (see fig. 7). In the process its visual exuberance depicts not only the anxieties about America's imperial identity that Miller describes, but also a vision of history characterized by the copresence of multiple pasts. Depicting the Mississippi Valley as a place of multiple histories—of Indian bones, of African American labor, of various gazes—in a popular format at once linear and layered, the Egan-Dickeson panorama, like Southworth and Lippard's fiction, enacts recursive processes of settlement and unsettlement within and across evolving national boundaries as it constructs visions of temporal, geographic compression that suggest the coexistence of past and present across geographies.

As advancements in print technology allowed serial fiction to flourish in story papers that were advertised and sold across the country, those same technologies allowed illustrations to accompany such fiction and to depict contemporary events like the US-Mexico War so that narrative and visual expectations influenced one another. New visual technologies enabled lecturers like Dickeson to unroll "scenic mirrors" like *Monumental Grandeur* for viewers, night after night. Such visual and print technologies create a variety of temporalities for their readers and viewers within ostensibly linear formats, and they engender episodic narratives characterized by rupture, contingency, and recurrence. This aesthetic, in turn, articulates a vision of historical multiplicity that has particular relevance in the context of settler space, which is itself always multiple, containing copresent, discrepant geographies.

This aesthetic of recurrence, of copresence, also reminds us of the limitations of conventional notions about periodization, particularly when it comes to histories of settlement. In a move that is in keeping with Mark Rifkin's emphasis on "the imperial structure of U.S. jurisdiction prior to the Civil War," Jack P. Greene (2007, 249) has suggested an approach to the American past that would emphasize continued

processes of settler colonialism, extending "the colonial perspective into the national era." I argue that the works I examine here do just this, disrupting conventions of periodization, putting various colonial and imperial moments in dialogue through forms that enhance a sense of repetition over time. Taken together, this particular archive articulates a vision of settler history in which temporalities coexist, in which the desire for fictional and historical narrative closure and coherence is proffered and often subverted. As such, for all their engagement with stereotypical gothic images of caves, pits, and mounds of bones, these works reorient our attention from discourses of repression and haunting to ongoing processes of movement, multiplicity, and copresence that better articulate the mechanisms and legacies of settler colonialism. What these works depict is not so much the return of repressed pasts, but rather pasts, and geographies, that never went away.

As US literary and cultural studies move to acknowledge multiple, alternative temporalities within the antebellum period, geospatial and geopolitical dynamism, and the nation's settler past, visual, material, and print cultures can provide ways to explore how always unsettled processes of settlement that are geographic and legal, narrative and visual, become replicated formally in a way that becomes an aesthetic engagement with the past as present. This approach can also offer different ways to engage with less canonical or recently "recovered" works. Southworth and Lippard dropped out of the story of nineteenth-century US literature for decades, their popular, sprawling, sensational novels relegating them to the margins of literary studies. Moving panoramas painted on lightweight muslin to help them travel were often ruined or lost rather than preserved. Yet these fleeting, popular forms provide insights into alternative cultural histories that allow us to envision the multiple temporalities and geographies of settler space.

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Notes

1 The broadside is reproduced in "A Mississippi Panorama" (Mason 1942) and also appears later in this essay. The advertisement says that "Dr. D. has devoted twelve years of his life in these investigations," but historical sources give the period of his travel as the eight years indicated here.

2 The museum will finally have space to make the panorama a permanent installation thanks to a 200,000 square foot expansion (see www.slam .org/Expansion). The difficulty of displaying the panorama is clear in an account of its November 1941 appearance at the Eastern States Archaeological Federation in Philadelphia, where it was apparently displayed unrolled. "Because it 'covered the walls and some of the cases in several halls' of the museum, 'it was shown for only three days,' according to Dr. J. Alden Mason . . . . The November display, he reveals, 'was probably the first . . . in ninety years.'" The panorama has rarely been displayed since (Mason 1942, 349).

3 Martha A. Sandweiss (1991, 102–3) notes that "The pressure to be topical was so intense that" one panorama "first exhibited in 1849, was updated in 1850 to show the most recent events in gold-rush California . . . . As early as mid-September 1849, a panorama depicting the voyage to California around Cape Horn was show in New York. The following year, 'James Wilkins' Moving Mirror of the Overland Trail' became the popular prototype for numerous panoramas showing the overland route to the goldfields."

4 Digital technologies have changed how viewers can interact with the panorama, making the "whole" more accessible than it has been in the past. Digital images of the individual scenes are available through the Saint Louis Art Museum's website, while the home page for the museum's "Restoring an American Treasure" exhibit features an image of the panorama that slowly scrolls across the top of the screen, allowing the panorama to once again move, if only virtually (see www.slam.org/panorama /index.php).

5 Such fiction may, in turn, have helped to prepare readers for emerging visual technologies. As Nancy Armstrong (1999, 27) points out, "in some cases fiction referred to components of the visual order for more than a decade before those components materialized" in visual culture.

6 Of course, the temporality of viewing Dickeson's performance would have been very different from that of reading a serialized novel. But I suggest that such a panorama might serve as an analog for the mediated experience of time, of narrative, present in serial fiction. More generally, the historical sensational novel might owe its creation and popularity less to the codex than it does to the serial periodical and, perhaps, forms of visual seriality.

7   Settlement studies, as Alex Calder (2011, x) has recently put it, "is not the same as the study of literature by early settlers. It is a form of postcolonial inquiry interested in a distinct set of problems shared by nations founded on the settlement of a 'new'—but already populated—world by modernising people from the 'old' world. Its basic premise is that the foundational problems, injustices and consequences of European settlement . . . will not disappear—though those problems can and often have been forgotten, underestimated or wished away."

8   See Reynolds (1982, 132) and Butterfield (1955, 305) for mention of *'Bel*'s serial origins. Issues of *Uncle Sam* from 1848 could not be located. The novel published by Hotchkiss and Company was registered in the "Clerk's Office, in the District Court of the District of Massachusetts" by George H. Williams, one of the brothers who published *Uncle Sam*, and the novel had wrappers advertising *Uncle Sam*, solidifying its connection to that paper.

9   I use the term *conjuncture* here not in the sense of a period separating epochs but rather to indicate "the simultaneous presence of several nonsynchronous temporalities," as Lloyd Pratt (2010, 44) puts it in his discussion of Althusser's use of the term.

10 Scholars of travel, exploration, empire, and settlement from Mary Louise Pratt to Paul Carter have, of course, emphasized the work of the "eye/I" in creating meaning across multiple colonial and imperial geographies. (See M. L. Pratt 1992, 201–6 for discussion of her term *monarch-of-all-I-survey*.) This has also been, as Hester Blum (2008, 122) puts it, "an enduring topic in American literary history." See Blum (2008, 122–23) for a brief consideration of critical conversations about the work of the "eye/I" in US literatures.

11 See Watts (2010, 462) for a discussion of how readings like Gardner's drift "toward the taxonomy of settler theory" represented by the work of a scholar like Alan Lawson.

12 "A focus on settlerism," Rana (2010, 10) writes, "provides us with the tools to connect the emancipatory and oppressive features of the American experience."

13 In a December 24, 1854 letter to Southworth, Peterson wrote, "This week's installment would not do without great alterations—indeed it would not. It would have ruined both you and the Post. Do not, for Heaven's sake, fall into your old blunder again. That free vein of your earlier writings injured you as you cannot compute—and now that Heaven in its mercy has given you a second chance, do not madly throw it away. . . . George Lippard had genius—but it killed both his works and, literally speaking, himself. Even now the great objection made to your works is that very thing—notwithstanding all my remonstrances for in your books you reinserted sometimes what I had omitted" (Emma Dorothy Eliza Nevitte Southworth Papers, 1849–1901 [microfilm], reel 3.

David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University, Durham, NC).

14 For discussion of the novel's serial publication see Looby (2004) and Edelstein (2010).

15 *Huge Mound and the Manner of Opening Them* (Scene 20) appeared in "Currents of Change: Art and Life along the Mississippi River, 1850–1861" at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 2004, and it appears on the cover of Michael A. Chaney's 2008 *Fugitive Vision: Slave Image and Black Identity in Antebellum Narrative.*

16 See fig. 7.

17 See Chaney (2008, 117–18) for a reading of the racial division of labor in this scene. According to Chaney, "For Egan's viewers . . . the panorama furnishes optic proof of the vanishing Indian, the supremacy of Anglo intellect, and the perpetuity of black labor" (118).

18 Chaney (2008, 117) identifies a "progression" of "chronological, spatial, and cultural typologies" in this panorama, "moving from tranquil indigenous families, to conflicts with settlers, to the eventual demise of indigenous populations." Miller (1994, 18) also acknowledges this narrative, but notes its "historical layering" and the fact that "the fractured historical narrative implied by this sequencing of scenes was echoed by their visual separation into discrete frames," preserving a sense of narrative openness and discontinuity.

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