Finally, in addition to a range of book reviews pointing toward the exciting publishing developments in periodical studies in the past year, we offer another installment in our on-going feature, "From the Periodical Archives." Here we publish "The Rejected Manuscript" (1893), a late story by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward that has not been reprinted in nearly a century. This story offers invaluable insight into Phelps' career, the world of late nineteenth-century periodical publishing, and the unique pressures facing the many female authors who contributed to American magazines during this period.

We are very proud of this issue and grateful to the growing number of exciting contributions from scholars in all areas of the field. We would be remiss, however, to close our column without calling on all our readers to demonstrate their much-needed support for the field and its future by joining the Research Society for American Periodicals. Membership in the RSAP brings with it a subscription to *American Periodicals*, as well as an international network of periodical scholars. Further, it allows the Society to continue to develop programs and projects in periodical studies. We hope you will consider supporting (or renewing your support of) this invaluable work to give periodical studies the forum, the community, and the visibility it so richly deserves.

Susan Williams, Steven Fink, and Jared Gardner
Columbus, Ohio
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**Extermination and Democracy:**
**O'Sullivan, the Democratic Review, and Empire, 1837–1840**

Robert J. Scholnick

In January 1848 Henry David Thoreau began his lecture on "Resistance to Civil Government" by asserting that "I heartily accept the motto—That government is best which governs least," and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically." The motto (actually "The best government is that which governs least")—had been emblazoned on the title page of *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review* (hereafter *Democratic Review*), the influential political-literary monthly, from its founding in 1837 through 1845. Thoreau had published an informal essay, "The Landlord," and a book review, "Paradise (To Be Regained)," in its pages in 1843, but in 1848 urging his listeners to resist the government because of its prosecution of the Mexican War, protection of slavery, and annexation of Texas, he implicitly takes issue with the prominent periodical, which that same month had published the first in a two-part series devoted to defending "The Mexican War: Its Origins, Its Justice, Its Consequences." Thoreau's reference to the motto of the *Democratic Review* cuts several ways: as a means of stressing individual responsibility for moral conduct in a democracy; as a criticism of a newly imperial America; and, it would seem, as an implicit rebuke to the nation's leading Democratic monthly, whose former editor, John L. O'Sullivan, he had called "at any rate one of the not-bad." In present-day America, Thoreau argued, the only place for a "just man" would be in prison, where he could make common cause with "the fugitive slave, the Mexican prisoner on parole, and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race." Yet, policies advocated by the *Democratic Review* from its founding in 1837 were responsible for the continued victimization of these groups.
Established in Washington by O'Sullivan and his brother-in-law Samuel Langtree, the Democratic Review moved to New York at the end of 1840. O'Sullivan ran the magazine until June 1846. It then exchanged hands several times before becoming defunct in 1859. No magazine more successfully articulated the principles and policies that actually guided and shaped American conduct during the 1830s, '40s, and into the '50s than the Democratic Review, which was closely allied with the administrations of Van Buren, Polk, and Pierce. It was in the pages of the Democratic Review, in July 1845, that O'Sullivan articulated America's "manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions." Here was the powerful phrase that promoted continental expansion, resulting in a doubling of American territory in four years.

The Democratic Review presents a unique site to explore the interconnections and contradictions of politics, rhetoric, literature, race, empire, and print culture during the antebellum years. How did an underfunded, paid monthly exert such influence? Especially on issues of race, the Democratic Review was reactionary, yet it attracted a galaxy of progressive writers, including Thoreau, Whitman, Bryant, and Lowell.

Few, if any contemporary periodicals spoke more eloquently of democracy than did the Democratic Review. In the 1839 "The Course of Civilization," O'Sullivan asserted that the "peculiar duty of this country has been to exemplify and embody a civilization in which the rights, freedom, and mental and moral growth of the individual man should be made the highest end of all social restrictions and laws." In the next sentence, however, he claimed that the "discipline of Providence" had best prepared the "Anglo-American race" to realize that democratic promise. Also in 1839, O'Sullivan announced America as "The Great Nation of Futurity": "The far-reaching, the boundless future will be the era of American greatness. In its magnificent domain of space and time, the nation of many nations is destined to manifest the excellence of divine principles; to establish on earth the noblest temple ever dedicated to the worship of the Most High—the Sacred and the True." Through the skillful use of such rhetorical figures as prolepsis, the Democratic Review swept readers along in a national narrative in which America serves as the divinely destined exemplar of human rights, individualism, material and spiritual progress, and democracy. But at this same time, the Democratic Review supported the "gag rule," which was used to prevent Congress from even debating the continued existence of slavery in the District of Columbia. Studies of the monthly, I shall argue, have not paid sufficient attention to the periodical's politics, even though the magazine was created precisely because changes in the structure of political parties necessitated just such a voice for the Democratic Party. The immediate task of the Democratic Review was to promote the fortunes of the Democratic Party, but its larger cultural work was to legitimize and naturalize a social order that included slavery, Indian extermination, and territorial conquest.

In 1858, Walt Whitman, who had contributed ten works to the Democratic Review during 1841-1845, praised it as a "monthly magazine of profounder quality of talent than any since." Perhaps following Whitman's judgment, literary and cultural scholars have elected to focus on what they have seen as the Democratic Review's progressive, democratic ethos. In Literary Criticism of "Young America" (1952), John Stafford depicted the contest between the American [Whig] Review and the Democratic Review as one in which "the party of the past and the party of the future made their opposition most explicit, showed most clearly the connection between literature and politics." But especially after its 1844 nomination of James K. Polk, a slaveholder, the Democratic Party was by no means "labor.

Writing in the first number of the Westminster Review in January 1824, James Mill explored the necessary connection between periodicals—his examples are the Edinburgh Review and the Quarterly—and political power. In what remains one of the most acute articles on periodicals ever written, Mill remarks that unlike books, periodicals, ephemeral by nature, "must have immediate success, to secure so much as existence." And success comes not by opposing the powerful, but rather by "flattering" their prejudices. The more the editor "can furnish such men with reasons for being more in love with their opinions than before," the more attention the periodical will attract attention—and the more favors will come to it:

The opinions, on the propagation of which the success of periodical writing depends,—immediate success, that success which is necessary to their existence,—are the opinions in vogue; the opinions of those whose influence is the most extensive, who can go farthest in creating or hindering a reputation. But what is the class most instrumental in setting the fashion, which exercises the greatest control over the opinions of other men? The answer is not uncertain. The people of power compose it. The favourite opinions of the people in power are the opinions that favour their own power; those opinions which we have already characterized as being the grand instruments of evil in this world, the ultimate and real cause of the degradation and misery of the great mass of mankind. To these opinions periodical literature is under a
sort of necessity, under an inducement which generally operates as necessity, of serving as a sort of pandar.15

Appearing a decade or so before the first Reform Bill, Mill’s essay may not translate directly to antebellum America, where political power was more widely diffused than in Britain, shared between the states and the federal government. Certainly rates of literacy and voter participation were much higher in America than in Britain. Nevertheless, Mill’s statement alerts us to the importance of an element missing in recent discussions of periodical culture. In “Reading the Periodical Press: Text and Context,” Lyn Pykett comments that Mill’s remarks might be translated into Althusserian terms under which the “periodical press, or the particular section under scrutiny, serves as an ideological state apparatus which reproduces and reinforces ruling class hegemony.”16 Mill argued that while periodicals may at times include oppositional voices, the effect is actually to limit and contain challenges to the structures of power on which the periodical itself depends.

It is of course true, as the editors of the 1994 collection Periodical Literature in Nineteenth-Century America point out, that “studying literature in periodical contexts can yield new discoveries about writers as familiar as Margaret Fuller, Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, and Emily Dickinson.”17 Yet, such a focus on the author function may well lead us to ignore the importance of politics, power, and money as elements constituting and delimiting the discourse of such periodicals as the Democratic Review.

Scholars have recognized that the Democratic Review took on an aggressive, combative tone in 1852, when a group of political adventurers led by George Sanders of Kentucky purchased the monthly to promote the presidential ambitions of Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois. In his signature piece of that April, “Progress of Democracy, vs. Old Fogy Retrogarder,” Sanders thundered that an “Old Fogy” was anyone who disagreed with the Democratic Review on such matters as territorial expansion, support of European revolutionaries, and condemnation of Abolitionism, which he attacked as a British plot against America.18 Scholars have argued that this phase in the Democratic Review’s history represents a sharp departure from its earlier progressive principles. Perry Miller insisted that now “it ... became a ghost, defending slavery and impotently berating the ‘senseless infuriated fanatics’ who controlled the Party in New England.”19 In Young America Edward L. Widmer asserted that the Democratic Review now came into the hands of a group that he called “Young America II”: “The first Young America expected American culture, by force of its excellence, to peacefully spread American influence as an intellectual Manifest Destiny; its successor expected American force alone to exercise its influence, along with whatever mediocre culture was attached to it. Beside their origin in the Democratic Review, they had little in common beneath the surface.”20 After 1852 the Democratic Review lost whatever literary distinction that it had, but the new editors did not fundamentally change its political allegiances. It was not, as David S. Reynolds commented in his biography of Whitman, that only “by the fifties” that the “two great champions of Young America,” John L. O’Sullivan and Stephen Douglas, had “become defenders of the South,” but that from the outset O’Sullivan and the Democratic Review were committed to protecting the South and slavery.21 To cite but one example, the Democratic Review warned in a September, 1840 article on “The Presidential Contest” that if the Whigs should win the election, the nation “would forfeit so large a portion of all that we have so laboriously and painfully gained during the last few years. We say nothing of the formidable aspect which the dark cloud of Abolitionism, now hanging so threateningly over the Union, would then assume.”22 In its first issue in 1837, the Democratic Review stated its opposition to “all precipitate radical changes in social institutions.”23

As reflected in Widmer’s comment quoted above, the Democratic Review has been credited with presenting America’s “manifest destiny” to expand as an essentially peaceful process. In several instances, as when it rebuked calls for American military support for Canadian insurgents, the periodical wisely cautioned against use of force. But O’Sullivan did not believe that the United States could become a continental power simply through the peaceful spread of democratic ideas. In the essay on “Annexion” in which he first used the phrase “manifest destiny,” he warned Mexico that the Anglo-Saxon vanguard was already hearing down on California with Bible in one hand and rifle in the other, and that it would be foolish to resist a process that would lead first to an independent Anglo-Saxon state and then incorporation into the United States. Given American power, Texas annexation and other absorptions of territory from Mexico were inevitable: “Even if the case had presented any serious obstacle of political formality, he has read all history in vain who may yet imagine that in the larger transactions of nations there is ever much difficulty about a way when there is any earnest will to find one.”24 Force and other forms of coercion, O’Sullivan understood, remained essential elements in diplomacy, as reflected in his support for Polk’s brinkmanship in the Oregon boundary dispute. In February 1846, just as the conflict with Britain was heating up, he published a belligerent sonnet sequence from William Cilmore Simms, “Progress in America: Or, a Speech in Sonnets, on Great Britain and the United States; not delivered either in Parliament or Congress.”25 Here “poetry,” or rather verse, is placed in the service of politics.

A recent biographer of Martin Van Buren has argued that literary culture and politics remained separate realms in the monthly, since the Democratic Review’s support for literature was merely a form of window-dressing: “O’Sullivan’s Review did much to personalize the
parties and its policies. It also gave an aura of respectability, of literary and intellectual pretension to what was essentially a partisan journal. The well-educated O'Sullivan eagerly sought and published pieces from the very best writers of the time.26 Similarly, Anders Stephenson claimed that the Democratic Review became the "liveliest and most interesting journal of its kind" in large part because of O'Sullivan's "liberality of literary taste."27 From this perspective, the editors kept the realms of the political and the cultural separate. But Perry Miller correctly recognized that the editors sought to integrate all aspects of the periodical—politics and artistic expression—into an ideologically consistent whole: "Today we can hardly conceive how the political parties were involved with the concern for literature," but then "protectionism was not something separate from style; a man's stand on the Bank was one with his stand on the romance. A union not only of the nation but of the nation's mind was the reason for being of the Democratic Review."28 The Democratic Review is such a compelling and important site precisely because of the ideological consistency of its several parts, as Thoreau discovered when he submitted his review of J. A. Etzler's The Paradise within Reach of All Men. In a letter to Emerson on August 7, 1843, Thoreau described the process by which all submissions were reviewed by an informal group to ensure consistency and reported that he reluctantly agreed to accept the editors' substitution of language to bring his review into harmony with the periodical's position on social reform.29

In a January, 1845 article on "Periodical Literature," the monthly complained that "nine-tenths of the magazine stories, so popular among us," have "nothing to do with this life, and no reference to that which is beyond it."30 Much—but not all—the poetry and fiction carried in its pages was designed explicitly to support its political agenda. In "The Indian Lover," published in October, 1846, an Indian describes himself as incurably violent and bloodthirsty: "I am a wild Lennape chief, / And love the game of life: / See yonder sumach's crimson leaf / 'Tis paler than my scalping knife."31 Since such a bloodthirsty Indian could not possibly be absorbed into the superior Christian civilization, his doom is sealed—precisely the policy of the Democratic Review in promoting the spread of Anglo-Saxons across the continent.

The most important writer who appeared regularly in the Democratic Review was Nathaniel Hawthorne, who considered O'Sullivan one of his closest friends and was the subject of a number of eulogistic sketches and reviews designed, as O'Sullivan told him, to make a "personage" of him. As a result, Hawthorne's name circulated "in a complex system of exchange that made it worth the party's while to provide him a livelihood and that gave him the character of a Democrat without requiring any act on his part," as Jonathan Arac has remarked.32 Hawthorne's Custom House position in Salem was a reward for his adherence to and support of the Democrats. Reflecting his involvement in the basic political and ideological questions that figure in the Democratic Review, Hawthorne wrote The Life of Franklin Pierce (1852), which advanced a pro-Southern argument on slavery that is consistent with policies advocated by the Democratic Review. He was rewarded with a lucrative position as consul in Liverpool.

I have identified four distinct periods in the periodical's life. The first began in 1837 with the monthly's founding in Washington with the support of the Van Buren administration. The second phase began after the magazine's move to New York in 1841, following Van Buren's defeat. Freed from the necessity of supporting a sitting administration, it became somewhat more open to diverse voices. In the third phase, beginning in 1844, the Democratic Review took on a leading role in campaigning for Polk and then articulating the policies of Manifest Destiny. The last phase begins in 1852, when under Sanders and his successors, it became increasingly strident, as the slavery question polarized the nation. The Democratic Review defined the issue, to use the title of an 1854 essay, as one of "Abolition vs. the Union."33 A full analysis would require far more space than I have available here. My focus is on the first phase of the magazine.

The Democracy and States' Rights: The Birth of the Democratic Review

The Democratic Review was born in a time of crisis for the Democratic Party, the Van Buren presidency, and the Nation caused by the severe financial panic that had taken hold the previous May. Winning the 1836 election, Van Buren had managed—but barely—to hold together Andrew Jackson's coalition of Southern slaveholders, working class whites, and farmers in the North and West, a coalition that the "Little Magician" himself had helped to put together. But his margins in the South had fallen below those of Jackson, and as a result of the Panic, the Democracy found its base of support continuing to erode. The opposition Whigs blamed the financial distress on Jackson's elimination of the Bank of the United States, even though, as historians have recognized, the Panic was caused by tightness in the British economy and a consequent reduced demand for cotton. Nevertheless, the Whigs began to make "dramatic gains almost everywhere," as "both disillusioned Democrats and first-time voters seeking economic recovery flocked to the Whig camp."34

The ensuing battle over the role of the Federal government in regulating national finances forced each political party to articulate "clear, coherent and conflicting philosophies about the proper role of both state and national governments in the economy" and to construct "concrete legislative programs reflecting those philosophies."35 Defending the elimination of the Bank, which, they charged, was the tool of
special interests, the Democrats articulated a philosophy of limited government. By way of contrast, the Whigs called for a strong Federal role in managing the nation's affairs, in banking, internal improvements (Clay's "American System"), and the imposition of a tariff to foster industry. The emerging ideological conflict dramatized the need for a periodical that would give philosophical depth to the cause of the Democracy, especially since much of the high-brow press was allied to the Whigs. Here was an ideal opportunity for the young and ambitious O'Sullivan and Langtree to create a periodical that would articulate the policy initiatives of the Party, but would do so with reference to a larger vision of the American destiny. The venture was funded primarily by the O'Sullivan family's claim against the American government as a result of the death of O'Sullivan's father, a sea captain and diplomat, during the War of 1812. Martin Van Buren himself had helped to push that claim through the Congress. With the promise of federal printing contracts, O'Sullivan and Langtree, who had been operating a newspaper in Georgetown, the Metropolitan, began the Democratic Review.  

From the outset, the Democratic Review shared with the Van Buren administration the complex and enduring legacy of Andrew Jackson. First, that required reassuring the Party's "base" among Southern slaveholders. Demonstrating his support for the South and the cause of States' Rights, Old Hickory had appointed five conservative Southerners to the Supreme Court, including Roger Taney of Maryland, who would write the Dred Scott decision. Jackson had denounced what he called the "wicked attempts" of Abolitionists to appeal to the "passions of the slaves." In the Senate, Vice President Van Buren supported John C. Calhoun's bill allowing local postmasters to intercept any literature outlawed by the legislatures in their states, a bill that failed 25–19. 

During the election campaign, following Southern Whig attacks on Van Buren as a New Yorker not sufficiently firm in resisting the Abolitionists, Democratic leaders rushed to assure the South that their candidate was "emphatically a FRIEND OF THE SOUTH," a point that the Administration underlined by intensifying its anti-Abolitionist activities.  

Indian removal was another Jackson policy that the Van Buren Administration implemented and O'Sullivan supported. Third, Van Buren continued Jackson's hard money position as a way, he claimed, of protecting farmers and workers against the dangers of an inflated currency and the depredations of the moneyed elite. Fourth, the Democratic Party resisted Federal expenditures on public works and the imposition of high tariffs, which, it charged, were only ways of lining the pockets of Northern commercial interests. Next, the Democracy, drawing from Jefferson and Jackson, favored westward expansion, which it saw as essential for the realization of America's "Manifest Destiny."  

Finally, O'Sullivan's Democratic Review sought to translate into artistic terms Jackson's unique rhetorical appeal to the common man, as reflected in such assertions as that "man can become more and more endowed with divinity; and as he does, he becomes more God-like in his character and capable of governing himself. Let us go on elevating our people, perfecting our institutions, until democracy shall reach such a point of perfection that we can acclaim with truth that the voice of the people is the voice of God." In an April 1842 essay on "Who Are the People?" John Inman argued that in contrast to European countries, "We have no class, unless indeed it be the slave population of the South and Southwest, who contribute to the expenses of the state without enjoying any share of its power. And the conclusion we arrive at is, either that all—presidents, governors, senators, and representatives in Congress, legislators of the States, and their constituents—the whole collectively, and no separate part or party exclusively, whether a majority or a minority—all, alike and with equal individual rights on the part of each to participate in the designation—all are 'The People,' or there are no 'people' among us." The ease with which the "slave population of the South and Southwest" is excluded reflects the role of the Democratic Review in "naturalizing" inconsistencies. Such omissions had become so common, so much an accepted part of American policy, that it was not necessary to do more than mention them in passing. 

In September 1837, in the depth of the financial crisis, Van Buren delivered an address to a special session of Congress in which he articulated what the historian Michael Holt has called the "negative government philosophy that would guide the Democratic Party for most of the century." The "Little Magician" asserted that "The less government interferes with private pursuits, the better for the general prosperity." 

The next month O'Sullivan and Langtree took up the challenge of producing a periodical that would rally support for the beleaguered president. Only one of the essays, "The Moral of the Crisis," is explicitly political. Here the Democratic Review forcefully defended the Administration's financial policies as a way of returning power to the people. However, the remainder of the volume was devoted to constructing the ideological positions that would equate the Democratic Party with the cause of America itself, while rationalizing slavery and Indian removal.

In the lead essay, "The Democratic Principle—The Importance of Its Assertion, and Application to Our Political System and Literature," O'Sullivan articulates the Democratic Review's support of a philosophy of limited government. Echoing Van Buren, O'Sullivan coined the phrase that became the periodical's motto: "The best government is that which governs least," a phrase that would speak strongly to Thoreau as well as the South. That first issue contained two eulogistic sketches of prominent Democratic politicians, the Senate's leading expansionist, Thomas Hart Benton, and the late senator from North
Carolina, Nathaniel Macon. Macon was known for his opposition to the tariff and advocacy of the doctrine of strict construction. A basic political motivation was his fear that the doctrine of "implied powers might one day be used to abolish slavery." The Democratic Review's eulogistic treatment of Macon as a model political thinker has been ignored by students of the periodical, but it reveals the magazine's firm allegiance to a Southern tradition which, paradoxically, spoke eloquently of the social equality of all (white) men, even as it denied the humanity of the slave. The Democratic Review would continue this line of legal reasoning. The remainder of the issue is composed of a series of essays, sketches, stories and poems. The idea aimed at exemplifying its conception of American democracy. The Democratic Review recruited, among others, Hawthorne, Whittier, and Bryant to contribute to the inaugural issue, which also included the first part of an extensive review of de Tocqueville's Democracy in America. The Democratic Review's "Mexican Antiquities," an anonymous translation from the Greek Anthology. Modern readers looking back at this issue focus almost exclusively on the opening essay's forceful call for American literary nationalism. This call, which would resonate with Whitman and others, is contemporaneous with Emerson's "The American Scholar" delivered just a month or so earlier, on August 31, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As had Emerson, O'Sullivan appealed to disaffected youth generally and the literary class specifically by asserting that the most potent influence in achieving a democratic America must be an authentic national literature, even though, at present "we have no national literature. We depend almost wholly upon Europe, and particularly England, to think and write for us, or at least to furnish materials and models after which we shall mould our own humble attempts." Thus calling for a break from European models and the creation of a literature expressive of American democratic values, O'Sullivan sought to convert what Emerson referred to as the "discontent of the literary class" by encouraging young writers and intellectuals to become actively involved in a cause fully worthy of their best efforts, American democracy. At a time when, as one scholar has written, "the man of letters had become peripheral to the life of the nation" and his despondency had been intensified by the effects of the Panic, O'Sullivan and Emerson both attempt to show that the writer-intellectual yet had an essential role to play in American culture. O'Sullivan was attempting to move the dispirited intellectual class from the margins to its center, thereby building an alliance between intellectuals and the democracy. The Democratic Review had to accomplish that goal even while reassuring the South. Drawing on what he called the "theory of Jeffersonian democracy," O'Sullivan, as I mentioned, coined the phrase that would resonate at once with such anti-institutionalists as Thoreau and Emerson and the slave-holders of the South: "The best government is that which governs least." Since the principle of limited government signified the capacity of individuals to manage their own affairs, it could be read as radically democratic, but it also appealed to the South since it removed the threat of Federal action aimed at eliminating or restricting the spread of slavery. Just as the natural world is a system capable of self-regulation, so too is the political organism. Ostensibly O'Sullivan sought to empower the people by attacking (in terms reminiscent of the Presidency of Ronald Reagan) the government itself: "Understood as a central consolidated power, managing and directing the various general interests of the society, all government is evil, and the parent of evil. A strong and active democratic government ... is an evil, differing in degree and mode of operation, and not in nature from a strong despotism." Could the same refrain that played in Charleston resonate in Concord? The South's "awareness of minority status," in the words of the historian David M. Potter, "caused the elaboration of the perennial southern political doctrines of states' rights." Now, proclaiming its unwavering support of states' rights and opposition to "all precipitate radical changes in social institutions," the Democratic Review placed itself firmly in "the school of the strictest construction of the constitution; and in that appears a full commitment of opinion on all the great political questions that now agitate the public mind." One way to turn attention away from domestic inconsistencies and injustices was to lay claim to a global mission of bringing democracy to the world. Accordingly, O'Sullivan treats American democracy as nothing less than a creed capable of liberating the world: "Democracy is the cause of Humanity. It has faith in human nature. It believes in its essential humanity and fundamental goodness. . . . Its object is to emancipate the mind of the mass of men from the degrading and disheartening fetters of social distinctions and advantages . . . . It is the cause of Christianity." The issue's concluding essay, "Retroactive View of the State of European Politics, Especially of Germany, Since the Last Congress of Vienna," claimed that democracy was very much on the march in Europe. At home, the Democratic spirit can be found in that loyal Van Buren supporter, Senator Thomas Hart Benton. The Democratic Review depicted Benton as embodying just those plain qualities most prized by the party of Jefferson and Jackson: "He does not come from the palaces of cities, or the elegantly furnished chambers of the Offices of Discount and Deposit. His constituency is to be found among the hardy and true-hearted pioneers of civilization, in the farthest south and west. His earliest sympathies are with the ploughman and planter of the land, and his political creed is imbued with the honesty and simplicity of their lives." Similarly, "Glances at Congress" depicts
the democratic spirit infusing the legislators gathered for the Special Session. Embedded within this essay is a vision of continental expansion that is a hallmark of the Democratic Review. It would not be long before legislators would arrive in Washington from both coasts and from the "isthmus of Darien" and from "the far wild regions of the north of our continent." 60

In concluding the initial essay, O'Sullivan spoke of three goals for the new periodical: "vindicating the true glory and greatness of the democratic principle," "infusing" that principle into the national literature; and finally, "rallying the mind of the nation." Appropriately, he followed this essay with a poem by Bryant, "The Battle-field," which also sought to "rally the mind of the nation." After paying tribute to the dead Revolutionary War patriots, the poet addresses all those who continue the fight: "For truths men receive not now," This battle may be a "friendless warfare," but one that eventually would result in "the victory of endurance born." 60 The political subtext of Bryant's poem was to liken Van Buren's battle against the Bank with the cause of the American revolutionaries against the British.

In directly addressing the political situation in the penultimate essay, "The Moral of the Crisis," the Democratic Review conceded that Van Buren and the Democracy were on the defensive: "It has been, indeed, a fearful tempest through which the vessel of the Administration has had to ride." For theseills it blamed "the enemies of the democratic cause," who "have not failed to profit by the present calamitous period, to renew assaults on the democratic Administration which has been at the head of affairs during the last eight or nine years." 61 But the Democratic Review argued that Van Buren's Independent Treasury would in short order restore confidence. Further, responding to what one scholar has termed a "profound sense among Democrats of degeneration from the values of the early republic" as a consequence of the expanding capitalist economy, the Democratic Review argued that a sacred American principle was involved: a return to the pure Republican values of an earlier, largely agricultural economy, before the corruption of capitalist speculation had brought economic dislocation and social corruption. 62 Some temporary economic distress was the price that must be paid for the elimination of the monstrous National Bank.

The Democratic Review certainly fulfilled the task of flattering its powerful patron by claiming that the "President's message has been well styled, on the floor of the Senate, another Declaration of Independence." Eulogy of its ability, manliness, and force, equally of argument and style, would be superfluous, as they were at once, with a spontaneous unanimity almost without precedent, acknowledged upon its reception by friend and foe." 63 And it fulfilled its task of reassuring the South by drawing a connection between the Democratic Party's economic policies and the Abolitionist movement: "There is a party de-
sirous of the emancipation of the negro race in the portion of the Union in which it is held in slavery; there is also a party desirous of emancipation of credit from the unnatural and oppressive letters with which a false system of legislation has encumbered it. Without designing to institute a comparison between the two, the duty of the General Government, of non-intervention, dictated by the State-Rights principle, is equally clear and imperative in both cases." 64

With poems by Whittier ("Palestine"), Bryant ("The Battle-field") and an anonymous translation from the Greek Anthology, and with fiction by Hawthorne ("Toil-gatherer's Day"), the first number demonstrated that a more than respectable literary standard could be achieved without reliance on foreign writers. It also published "The Worth of Woman," a translation from the German of Schiller. Over the years it would make extensive use of translations from European authors, especially those associated with such movements as "Young Germany." 65 In the opening essay, O'Sullivan admitted that since as yet there had been no American literature, the country's democracy is not known abroad, even though that democratic vision is much needed. In a stroke, he sought to reverse American cultural dependency by deploying the hypothesized American literature to convert Europe to the American democratic cause. The Democratic Review charged that "The anti-democratic character of our literature, then, is a main cause of the evil of which we complain; and this is both a mutual cause and effect, constantly acting and re-acting. Such assertions conceal and obscure America's own "anti-democratic character." The Democratic Review ignored the fact that with Jackson's encouragement, Southern leaders and their allies in the North were using violence to silence the Abolitionist minority. Even as the Democratic Review claimed that American democracy is open and free, it had worked to stifle dissent. But as Mill observed, "by pompous talking about the public spirit of the people, about independence of mind, and so forth, displayed and generated in the turbulence of an election, it is expected that the vanity of the people will be piqued; and they will be persuaded to believe they are something, by that which effectively proves they are nothing." 66

States' Rights, the Judiciary and the Politics of Indian Removal

O'Sullivan and Langtree published only that October number during 1837: regular monthly publication began the next January. The connection between the periodical's advocacy of "strictest construction" of the Constitution and race becomes clear in its essay on "The Supreme Court." Singling out Justices Story and Marshall, the Democratic Review offered a broad-based criticism of the Court's "abuse" of its powers through "over-action," as in the conflict between Georgia
and the Cherokees. In the 1831 Cherokee Nation v. Georgia case, the Supreme Court ruled that since the tribe was a "domestic dependent nation," it lacked jurisdiction to intercede, despite its own sympathy for the aggrieved Cherokees. However, in Worcester v. Georgia of the following year, the Court held that through its treaty with the United States government, the Cherokees were entitled to Federal protection. Since Congress itself had made treaties with the Cherokees, the state of Georgia had no right to interfere with the activities of the sovereign Cherokee nation within their own territories. But this was the decision that Andrew Jackson famously refused to enforce, thus giving the sanction to the policy of removal of the Cherokees, after the spurious treaty of New Echota, in which a small group of Indians allegedly agreed to removal.58

In 1838 Van Buren ordered federal troops under the command of General Winfield Scott to accomplish this act of removal in what became known as the "trail of tears." Here is how the Democratic Review described the case: "Georgia was once more vexed in a most irritating quarrel with her Indian inmates, the Cherokees—Judges Johnson and Baldwin slowly dissentent against a minatory opinion, which rather branded than hurled the veto; but next session the lightning went with the thunder, striking a sovereign State lifeless, at the feet of a savage tribe adjudged a nation, as several States had been before paralyzed at the footstool of a banking corporation."59 The principle of state sovereignty that was used to protect slavery here is employed to justify the policies of Georgia in seizing Cherokee lands, despite the existence of a treaty between the Tribe and the Federal Government. The term "savage tribe" is meant to prepare the public to accept removal and disappearance. But in no way could the Cherokees be described as "savage" or "uncivilized." The Democratic Review made no mention of the tribe's adoption in 1827 of the Constitution of the Cherokee Nation, since it posed a direct challenge to the American national identity that the Democratic Review now was defining. Friscilla Wald has written that "The nationalist Cherokee, by initiating rather than assimilating or otherwise disappearing, recontextualize the logic of United States nationalism. A Cherokee nation would ironically recapitulate the relation of the pre-revolutionary colonies to England...conceptually complicating ideas of American exceptionalism, absorptiveness, and republicanism."60 In such articles as "Our Indian Policy" of 1844, the Democratic Review justified removal and eventual extermination: "Every year has exemplified the futility of raising them up to the European standard in industry, in intelligence or character, while thus situated; nor, indeed, has it been practicable to shield them effectually against the combined effects of intemperance, personal sloth, and of popular and vulgar contumely."61

Justifying its adherence to the principles of judicial restraint, the Democratic Review in the article on the judiciary cited the writings of the Virginian John Taylor of Caroline, who went so far as to argue that since states are sovereign, the Federal courts have no power over the states whatsoever. Taylor was "a Virginia planter-pamphleteer whose fine-spun theories of states' rights and strict construction had little effect at the time (early in the century) but delighted the logic-choppers of later years."62 In the years before the Civil War, the doctrine of states' sovereignty as developed by such theorists as Taylor would be used to justify the right of secession.63 As if preparing for the battles to come, now the Democratic Review called Taylor's "an original and most able, argument, which denies altogether the right of Congress to give the Federal judiciary revision of either State laws or State adjudications." While the periodical, which would cite Taylor repeatedly over the next decade, would not go all the way with him entirely "to deny the power" of the Supreme Court to review and "interdict State laws," it still protested that the Court had far exceeded its powers from the time of Marbury. Seeking to shift the balance of authority back to the states, the Democratic Review charged that since "the judicial department has arrogated political authority, not belonging, and extremely injurious, to it, we desire to see this usurpation laid down, only that its legitimate jurisdiction may be more firm, unquestionable and useful."64 The essay develops a legal theory to justify appointments to the Federal courts who would uphold states' rights, as well as Indian removal.65

The next July, in the second-part of its discussion of Democracy in America, the Democratic Review reported on de Tocqueville's prediction of the "entire disappearance, at no very remote period, of the few existing remnants of the native tribes." Missing is any sense of the moral force of de Tocqueville's trenchant analysis of race in America. The Democratic Review used the neutral word "disappearance" as a means of separating human responsibility or agency from the policy that it supported. The monthly then raised the question of the place of Blacks within the American nation: "The attempt to raise them to a political equality with the white race, has not succeeded in practice in the States where it has been carried into effect in theory. It will probably never be made in the States where the slaves constitute a large proportion of the population. But the very decided superiority of an entire free population over a mixed population of freemen and slaves, which is shown too clearly in the progress of the United States to be in any way questionable, will gradually make itself felt over the whole surface of our territory, and will substitute the former for the latter in all the States in an operation as unerring though somewhat slower than that which substitutes the white population in place of the Indian."66 Such statements do more than predict, they justify the eventual disappearance of both Indians and Blacks from America.

Asserting in 1839 that America is "The Great Nation of Futurity," the Democratic Review claimed that the nation could realize its destiny only by possessing a virgin territory. Where the Whigs argued that
The Death of Leggett and the ‘Gag Rule’

In January 1840, following the death of the outspoken New York Democratic journalist William Leggett (1801-1839), a hero of the reformers or Locofocos, the Democratic Review published a lively appreciation. But no mention is made of Leggett’s late—during the last year of his life—embrace of Abolitionism. In an editorial in his own paper, the Plaindealer, he expressed “mortification and chagrin that the banner of our country is the emblem, not of justice and freedom, but of oppression” because it recognized “the right of one man to hold another as property; and that we are liable, at any moment to be required, under our obligation of citizenship to array ourselves beneath it, and wage a war of extermination, if necessary, against the slave, for no crime but asserting his equal humanity.”

The monthly chose to ignore this late conversion to antislavery and his protests against the policies of the Jackson Administration in closing the mails to the Abolitionists. Leggett came to protest as well the treatment of free blacks in New York City. The previous November, the periodical published William Cullen Bryant’s poem on Leggett, in which he praised his former associate’s absolute moral courage, his ability to produce “words of fire . . . [that] Still move, still shake the hearts of men, / Amid a cold and Coward age.” If the Democratic Review had been the sort of liberal, progressive journal praised by subsequent critics, it would have followed Leggett’s late embrace of antislavery. Indeed, over the decade of the forties and into the fifties, the Democratic Review would become a leading Northern periodical in developing the ethnographic principles that would justify slavery and Indian extermination. But in this, the Democratic Review was only being true to its origins.

NOTES

2 The United States Magazine and Democratic Review 1 (October 1837). The Democratic Review is available on microfilm and digitally through the American Periodical Series and on the Web through Making of America.
20. Widmer, Young America, 185–86.
29. Quoted in Widmer, Young America, 69.
36. A good source for O'Sullivan's life is Robert D. Sampson, John L. O'Sullivan and His Times (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2003).
39. John Inman, "Who are the People?" Democratic Review 10 (April 1842): 945.

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30. Potter, The Impending Crisis, 492.