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A Sailor's Intimacy: Homosocial Labor in Nineteenth-Century Oceanic Narratives by Dana and Melville

Adrian R. Salgado
Florida International University, asalg021@fiu.edu

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

A SAILOR'S INTIMACY: HOMOSOCIAL LABOR IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY OCEANIC NARRATIVES BY DANA AND MELVILLE

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To: Dean Michael R. Heithaus
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This thesis, written by Adrian R. Salgado, and entitled A Sailor's Intimacy: Homosocial Labor in Nineteenth-Century Oceanic Narratives by Dana and Melville, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

_____
Ana Luszczynska

_____
Martha Schoolman

_____
Mark B. Kelley, Major Professor

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The thesis of Adrian R. Salgado is approved.

_____
Dean Michael R. Heithaus
College of Arts, Sciences and Education

_____
Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all the sailors whose voices from the forecastle were silenced and never truly heard in their fullest capacity.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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Adrian R. Salgado

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Miami, Florida

Professor Mark B. Kelley, Major Professor

This thesis studies the male sailor community in Richard Henry Dana's Two Years Before the Mast and Herman Melville's Moby-Dick and how they are portrayed in terms of homosociality and intimacy. The presence of a homosocial community on board a sailing vessel provided a means of forming a group of men that cultivated relationships and communications through the production of labor with one another. Both Melville and Dana engaged readers in the workings of a sailor's life and how those interactions on board a ship with fellow sailors formed a premise for the evaluation of maritime labor in nineteenth-century oceanic narratives. The creation of these labor spaces is a communal means of sharing thoughts, feelings, and emotions with each sailor. Through the analysis of sea shanties sung during labor in Two Years Before the Mast and the intimate relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg in Moby-Dick, this thesis revolves around the labor aspects of each sailor's presence on board a sailing vessel and how their close, homosocial desires connect each one of them more intimately.

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INTRODUCTION

"[T]here has not been a book written, professing to give their life and experiences, by one who has been of them, and can know what their life really is. *A voice from the forecastle* has hardly yet been heard."

—Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast*

Sailors' labor is transformative. Richard Henry Dana manifests the transformation in a literary and historical transition by pronouncing his "voice from the forecastle" (3) and effectively engaging the labors of common sailors. By providing a narrative voice to these historical sailors, Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* effectively represents the lives of these sailors in that he provides them with voice. Their voice is embedded in interactions with each other and by giving a "voice" to these sailors, it becomes a literary creation that not only showcases the labors of these sailors, but their internal, intimate connections founded in their surrounding homosocial environment. In other words, Dana is trying to translate the identity of a sailor and present it to a non-sailor audience, since he himself is of that sailor identity. If Dana establishes his narrative in sailors' intimacy, homosocial relationships, and labor, then he introduces voices that would be amplified in other narrative forms, such as in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*.

Therefore, the present thesis will provide a study on the focus of maritime labor and then distinguish between Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* and Melville's *Moby-Dick* in terms of how intimacy in both of these texts revolves around labor. Dividing the thesis into two separate, yet associated pieces, will allow for the first chapter to be on sea shanties as a communal labor practice and then move to queering the male relationships found in Melville's *Moby-Dick* that are found in the labor production and ship spaces that

these sailors are placed in. In short, the thesis aims to make the homosocial voices from the forecastle more pronounced.

In order to establish a connection between Dana and Melville in conjunction with their literary creations, it becomes necessary to show how both Dana and Melville's historical labors have framed their literary narratives. Dana was born on August 1, 1815, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and enlisted as a common sailor on the brig *Pilgrim* (Philbrick 875). In 1840, Harper and Brothers published *Two Years Before the Mast*, when "[f]actual voyage narratives, written from a 'forecastle-eye' point of view, defiantly truthful, and sanguine about their own moral influence upon sailors and the general public alike, almost overnight became a publishing mainstream" (Lucid 243). As such, Melville, born August 1, 1819, in New York City and sailing on the *St. Lawrence* in 1839, the *Acushnet* in 1841, and the *USS United States* in 1842 (Knip 359), was influenced by Dana's work, where "it is clear that Melville can be said to be working from, if not in, a tradition which Dana established" (Lucid 243–244). In 1851, the publication of *Moby-Dick* follows what Hester Blum calls in *The View from the Masthead: Maritime Imagination and Antebellum American Sea Narratives* "a decade of maritime narratives that took their cue from Dana's narrative" (87).

As the thesis will show, both authors engage readers in the workings of sailors' lives; moreover, both authors invite scholars to use these historical narratives to foreground them in homosocial relationships embedded in nineteenth-century maritime labor. As they confirm, sailors' labor is a communal means of sharing thoughts, feelings, and emotions among each sailor. As such, the labor that is produced becomes the center of each sailor's work life when they are out at sea. Both these narratives by Dana and

Melville illustrate how the labor they produce is enveloped in the production of intimate encounters in a homosocial work setting that is combined with shanties, or work songs, that produce nostalgia and remembrance in these sailors. In combination with shanties and each sailor's own connection with their sailor companion, intimacy is brought upon these individuals and creates a sense of deeper connections than is normally observed in these oceanic narratives.

Incorporating Transoceanic Studies in a Homosocial Sphere

Like Dana, scholars in oceanic and queer studies provide a gateway to interpreting and evaluating homosocial conditions on board sailing vessels. Oceanic scholars like Margaret Cohen, Michelle Burnham, and Hester Blum, argue how a sailor's way of life creates changed literary forms. In other words, these sailors' identities and imaginative products are transformed from their lives on land to their lives on board. A turn to queer studies allows for the homosocial aspect of these narratives to come to the forefront. Scholars such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Michel Foucault, and Matthew Knip show how sailors' homosocial practices are enhanced when in the vicinity of one another. Being in the confines of a ship, for example, would constitute the emergence of a homosocial environment, in that, it would be considered impossible to turn away from certain behaviors in this atmosphere. Sailors' homosocial connections are evident in the physical space of a ship, where they are shown as having their labor performed in conjunction with those other men around them. Introducing transoceanic studies in a homosocial sphere confirms that sailors' emotional, intimate laboring connections are both cemented and revealed in practices such as singing or sharing space.

Furthermore, both authors place these narratives within a foundation of labor that is placed within a literary discussion. Both these narratives by Dana and Melville contribute to the idea of not disregarding the sailor as an entity in maritime labor, but as an actual identity within their maritime labor and homosocial communities on these sailing vessels. As Hester Blum constitutes in "The Prospect of Oceanic Studies," maritime authors contributed to unbounding themselves from the constraints of literature as they concentrated on sailing culture and even the lives of these sailors. Blum argues that "[a]cknowledging the sailor…allows us to perceive, analyze, and deploy aspects of the history, literature, and culture of the oceanic world that might otherwise be rendered obscure or abstract" (671). In turn, Margaret Cohen confirms that the sea novel became a passage for maritime culture to be expressed and represented in these texts. Moreover, Margaret Cohen's "Literary Studies on the Terraqueous Globe" also discusses how oceanic narratives, like *Moby-Dick*, were considered a new maritime modernization, where they "were products of the country that had pioneered sea adventure fiction in the nineteenth century, in conjunction with American maritime nationalism" (659). In addition, Michell Burnham in "Oceanic Turns and American Literary History in Global Context" states that by having "[a] transoceanic turn that moves toward imagining American literary history in the context of the planet's multiple, and interconnected, oceans might change the way we think about space, about archives, about materiality, textuality, and translation" (157). As such, Burnham and other scholars allude to how there is an aim to establish how the space on the ship is to be considered a moving vessel at sea, which is enveloped in mobility, movement, and transportation.

In analyzing the sailor narratives of Melville and Dana, "homosocial," "queer," and "homosexual" become prominent keywords in their use throughout the present thesis. Homosociality signifies a male community where sexual or non-sexual acts could be performed. Homosociality is a term that identifies how these sailors are placed in a setting. A maritime setting is a homosocial one because the ships in these novels are composed of a male community of sailors. What occurs in this homosocial setting could be sexual or non-sexual, but the term homosociality is all-encompassing of these actions that could be found on a ship. Queerness then becomes another key term in the study, where queerness is defined by the physical interaction between sailors, where the incorporation of the term derives from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's definition, where an "open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses, and excesses of meaning" (8) are found in the relationship with these individuals. For example, Ishmael and Queequeg, two main characters in *Moby-Dick*, have a central relationship that expands from non-physical to a relationship where both men are making physical body contact in an enclosed space (e.g., on a bed in a bedroom). Homosociality then becomes my keyword because it encompasses the same-sex practices throughout as a connection to the use of homosexuality in another narrative form, such as *Moby-Dick*.

In recreating homosocial space on a ship, the authors introduce relationships that are cultivated and formed on the basis of intimacy. The intimacy that is brought upon by these men can be represented by the physical labor and connections surfaced by that labor that is produced by these sailors. The homosocial space that is found on board sailing vessels accounts for each of the male sailors that make up the physical form of the ship itself. The intimacy that is shared among the sailors is portrayed in terms of

homosociality because the term is all-encompassing of the relations between sailors, their communications, actions, etc. between one man and another (or groups of men). Intimacy, for the purpose of the present thesis, revolves around the idea that these sailors formed strong bonds on board and created concentrated associations through the labor they produced on a day-to-day basis. In other words, the presence of a homosocial community on board a sailing vessel provides a means of forming a group of men that cultured complex relationships and communications through the production of labor with each other.

While using homosociality does not exclude homosexuality, it allows the act of labor to bring about intimate connections between sailors. Homosociality outlines sexual tension that may be present in a homosocial shanty about nostalgia for the home and while engaging in labor, intimacy then becomes necessary. In *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*, Sedgwick proposes how homosociality and homosexuality can be viewed in terms of its definitions, where "[t]o draw the 'homosocial' back into orbit of 'desire,' of the potentially erotic, then, is to hypothesize the potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual—a continuum whose visibility, for men, in our society, is radically disrupted" (1–2). The homosocial desire is then brought in conjunction with a homosexual panic that will later be discussed when approaching the relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg. The form of male bonding produces an intimate desire to be close to one another, and in the space of the ship containing these bonds with each male and their male sailor companions.

To add, by engaging with the idea of the identity of a homosexual as a "personage," the sailor's own identity brings about a means of how homosociality, by discussing it, depicts a representation of same-sex relationships that are featured in these two oceanic narratives. In Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, the discussion of homosexuality becomes prominent as one of the central factors in Foucault's argument, where "[t]he nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage…" (43) rather than a "juridical subject" of sodomy laws, where "[t]he sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43). It is not by repressing these homosocial relationships for what they are, but by acknowledging that they exist in various forms, such as through labor or through sexual depictions. Melville is writing about acts that are positioned in a same-sex desired practice, which is in the process of being deemed "homosexual," but are connected to historical acts/desires. Maritime labor then becomes connected to these acts or desires and provides an understanding that they are both homosocial and classified as a same-sex practice.

Placing Dana and Melville in a Literary and Labor Discussion

Homosocial bonding is seen in both *Two Years Before the Mast* and *Moby-Dick*, where the first narrative shows how sea shanties offer a passage for such forms of male bonding and create the intimacy that these sailors encounter with each other through song. During the act of a shanty, for example, the sailors are singing together and the lyricality of each shanty presents emotions, nostalgic reactions, etc. which they can share with each other when expressing these emotions in an enclosed space such as that of a ship. In the second narrative, evaluating the physical same-sex relationship between Ishmael, Queequeg, and other fellow sailors further creates and establishes how sailors on

board sailing vessels produce intimacy through their interactions such a laboring on a day-to-day basis. The method of analysis will allow for the separation of two prominent factors during labor on board sailing vessels. While the study of Dana's narrative will primarily focus on shanties as the forefront of these sailors' intimacy, the term intimacy is prominent in both narratives in defining and identifying how these individuals worked on such a sailing vessel with other male sailors to create bonds in such a homosocial work setting. In turn, Dana's narrative shows that these sea shanties are a product of these homosocial relations through the interactions during labor and in Melville's narrative, the closeness in bonds between two sailors, for example, is portrayed and developed from an initial encounter on land to their future encounters throughout their onboard journey.

As my two chapters will show, discussing Dana's incorporation of sea shanties before transitioning to Melville's portrayal of homosocial relationships brings a fuller voice to the forecastle. In the first chapter, "Homosocial Shanties as Intimacy in Dana," I show that Dana evokes a facet of a sea shanty and its purpose in the narrative, *Two Years Before the Mast*. Sea shanties, a type of work song, were primarily used on nineteenth-century sailing vessels as a partly limited means of pronouncement, or expression, to encourage sailors to perform strenuous acts of labor while engaging in a form of unified communal activity and experiencing expressive participation, nostalgic emotions and an integrated sense of self while at sea. The intimate bonds formed on board surrounded by shanties allow for the creation of a homosocial environment where aspects of queerness, same-sex associations and relationships can be further developed. As such, the bonds formed create a segue into discussing Melville's *Moby-Dick* in terms of how sexuality plays a factor in these homosocial attitudes between sailors. The second chapter of my

thesis, “Heating Homosocial Bonds in Melville,” will focus, while still revolving around the theme of maritime labor and intimacy between men, on the queer relationship that we see between Ishmael and Queequeg, primarily. In addition, the use of shanties will be connected to Dana’s narrative through the use of the chapter, “Midnight, Forecastle,” and others in *Moby-Dick* to represent the intimate connection among sailors singing during labor. By incorporating queer theory into this section, the examination of how these relationships function within the realm of a maritime labor community will come to the forefront and establish how these homosocial relationships are representative of the nineteenth-century sailor identity.

HOMOSOCIAL SHANTIES AS INTIMACY IN DANA

In *Two Years Before the Mast*, Richard Henry Dana recounts many instances where shanties (or sailors' songs) were a vital part of the labor being performed on board his sailing vessel. Without shanties, the labor could be unmotivating and the emotions felt would not coincide with sailors' effort. In other words, Dana reiterates how shanties ensure that labor is "done 'with a will'" (104); in such moments, "the windlass goes briskly round with the loud cry of 'Yo heave ho! Heave and pawl! Heave hearty ho!' and the chorus of 'Cheerily, men!' cats the anchor" (104). Here, Dana and crew are pulling up the anchor with the combination of a call and response, which signifies a unified labor force on the ship. However, this purposes the fact that emotion is correlated with these work songs and requires an uplifting and upbeat spirit. As a result, Dana expresses how they "pulled a long, heavy, silent pull, and—as sailors say a song is as good as ten men—the anchor came to the cat-head pretty slowly" (104).

In such moments, the will to sing is the will to labor. That is, both depend on the power of the song and the power of the labor interchangeably to create effort and motivation in each sailor. Without a song being "as good as ten men," then the will is ruptured, and while the labor is still being performed, the effort and continuity are greatly diminished. With song, homosocial desire is brought in relation to the act of singing and laboring. Having these sexual undercurrents, as I will show in the next chapter, is something that Dana introduces but is further established in Melville's narrative. Ultimately, Dana confirms, sea shanties are not just a means for performing necessary work. They are emotional aiding forms that require upbeat and uplifting feelings from the sailor, so it correlates with the rhythm, sound, and movement of the shanties themselves.

In order to be a good sailor, you need to have a homosocial desire. In being a good sailor, you have efficient labor being performed. As a result of performing these shanties, the literal sense and function of having a "voice from the forecastle" shows that these shanties are important. Voice, or singing voice, provides these sailors with initiative and allows for their surrounding homosocial environment to be enhanced. These homosocial shanties connect these sailors, and by being able to analyze these shanties, it allows for the access of the narrative forms that Dana provides. In other words, shanties become the literal voices from the forecastle and the way that Dana connects them narratively. Connecting shanties with labor brings about this form of homosocial labor that is further elaborated with the incorporation of singing. As work/labor songs, sea shanties were primarily used on nineteenth-century sailing vessels as a partly limited means of pronouncement by sailors to encourage them to participate in strenuous labor, while engaging in a process of unified communal activity. These shanties contributed to the experience of having expressive participation, nostalgic emotions and an integrated sense of self while performing duties out at sea. The functionality of these sea shanties was allocated as vessels for representations of sailors' lives and minds since the very act of harmonious singing in itself translates to an elevated feeling and emotional sense. In turn, creating a furthering motivation for continuing labor on board.

In *Two Years Before the Mast*, Dana expresses the rich usability of sea songs (shanties) and by classifying specific shanties, such as "Leave Her, Johnny," "Whiskey, Johnny" and "Cheerily Men," their etymology, thematic connections, performance and effects on sailors, the revelation of details of these sailors is brought into perspective and allows for a more emotional connection, rather than just for the purpose of continued

labor on board a sailing vessel. With the inclusion of these shanties in relation to labor, the narrative form is pronounced and allows for a sailor's intimacy to bring itself to the foreground in Dana's literary creation.

Understanding Sea Shanties in Relation to Labor and Homosociality

One particular statement from Dana shows how valuable a shanty can be to a sailor: "A song is as necessary to sailors as the drum and fife to a soldier. They can't pull in time, or pull with a will, without it" (250). Dana makes a comparison for the sailors at sea and the soldiers who are on land. While land and sea may be different, he is saying that something so simple as a song or a drum and fife, while unique in their own nature, constitute the meaning of sound and the effect that sound has on those hearing it. The effect is especially true when the sailors or soldiers are enduring something that could be physically and mentally exhausting. The "will" from something so small as a song shows its unique power and uplifting sense to these individuals. In connection to having a homosocial community of sailors on board sailing vessels, the soldier identity becomes a relation to the sailor identity. The soldier community has a narrative outlet that should be recognized as viable as a sailor community. A sailor's community is understood as being homosocial just as a soldier's community even if they have varying social structures. As such, Dana confirms elsewhere, each sailor "considers himself bound to do everything for, and with whom he has a sort of contract,—an alliance offensive and defensive,—and for whom he will make the greatest sacrifices" (141). Having a mutual understanding between sailors contributes to their own homosocial desires with one another. With a mutual understanding, being in an enclosed space on a ship always having to labor at the

forefront of their day-to-day occurrences, deepens this homosocial bond. In other words, the "voice from the forecastle" is constituted narratively and historically.

Homosocial desire powers sailors' vocal performances during labor ("sea shanties") or during leisure ("sea songs"). These distinct musical forms reinforce a shared mission to establish a laboring union. In "The Background of Sea Shanties," Harold Whates classifies shanties as musical forms that "were sung at work and had an exact relationship to the many varieties of heavy physical toil involved in handling a square-rigger. No sailor would ever have dreamt of singing a shanty in his watch below" (260). However, according to Whates, sea songs were music that were given the classification "as everything sailors sang in hours of relaxation" (260). The clear distinction between the associations of "labor" and "relaxation" is made evident in these definitions and relates to how a sailor functioned on board a sailing vessel and how the performance of such song forms on that vessel made way for their continued workmanship.

While Dana uses the term "sailors' songs" or just "songs" when describing the musicality mirrored in his personal experiences on board, it is clear that Dana's descriptions and other depictions of work are closely related to that definition of a sea shanty, a work song. In other words, voicing is found in both relaxation and labor. Both aspects are necessary and provide a contributing force to the homosocial aspect of the sailor community on board a sailing vessel. In turn, Dana is being authentic and is giving a new literary form to capture this labor. By describing these "songs" in the same way as shanties, the homosocial form of this singing activity during or not during labor gives way to the intimacy and bonding that is created within each sailor.

For example, the sea shanty, “Whisky Johnny,” is created on the basis of pleasure and labor. The themes of the song are elusive of pleasure such as drinking but is also used as a work song in the act of working together to have a task completed on the ship. In “Whiskey, Johnny,” the theme of pleasure is prominent. In turn, the act of drinking alcohol relates to the pleasures of an individual or group of sailors:

Whiskey is the life of man,

Chorus Whiskey Johnny!

Oh, I’ll drink whiskey while I can,

Chorus Whiskey for my Johnny!…

Whiskey killed my poor old dad,

Whiskey druv my mother mad…

A glass of grog for every man,

And a bottle for the shantyman. (qtd. in Rose 158)

However, the lyrics themselves reveal an undertone of worry that certain indulgences will create downfalls, especially in familial matters as the lyrics say, “[w]hiskey killed my poor old dad, / Whiskey druv my mother mad” (158). Also, as stated by Rose, “[w]hile these songs are optimistic in content and tone, they often express themes of melancholy as well. The pleasures of the sailor are generally not treated as wholly positive, and often mention the complications that come as a result of indulgence” (158). Having complications relates to the experiences that may have happened while out at sea, especially with the conditions of weather as expressed in “Leave Her, Johnny.”

As a result of the word “shanty” not being introduced until after the publication of Dana’s published account on board a sailing vessel, in *Two Years Before the Mast*, Dana

does not particularly utilize the term "shanty," but rather incorporates the use of "sailors' songs" in his narrative. As for the exclusion of the word "shanty," "the word 'shanty' itself seems not to have been used before the mid-1800s and first appeared in print in 1869" (N. Cohen 100). However, during his depictions of certain songs, Dana classifies the main characteristics of certain sea shanties. For example, Dana makes associations with the sailors' songs with the type of shanty as "[t]he sailors' songs for capstans and falls are of a peculiar kind, having a chorus at the end of each line. The burden is usually sung by one along, and, at the chorus, all hands join in,—and the louder the noise, the better" (250). In this particular instance, Dana classifies a capstan shanty that is used with the inclusion of a shantyman (a crew member) as the rest of the crew join in for the chorus.

The type of sea shanties become important in establishing the intimate connection sailors had with the song itself and one another. Moreover, sea shanties are classified in two basic forms: "the hauling [shanty], which includes halyard [shanties] and bunting [shanties], and the heaving type, such as pumping chanteys and capstan [shanties]" (Carr 69). The distinction between these two forms of shanties is pertinent to the appropriation of certain shanties and their purpose on board a sailing vessel. Hauling shanties were associated with jobs that required constant force being applied at certain times, while heaving shanties were incorporated for labor that required continual force at a sustained rate without interruption. According to Rose, hauling shanties included: "Halyard or 'long drag' songs, short haul or 'short drag' songs, sweating-up, fore-sheet, or bowline songs, bunt shanties, hand-over-hand songs and walkaway or stamp-'n'-go songs" (151), while heaving shanties included: "Main capstan or windlass songs, capstan songs and

pump shanties" (151–152). It is important to note that these shanties were developed in order to accommodate the labor process endured by sailors and while the act of singing sea shanties allowed for a collaborative effort, "[s]hantying was exclusively an activity of sailors [and] officers and ship-owners were wholly excluded from participating in them" (152). By having this exclusivity associated with sea shanties and sailors, these sailors allowed for an internal homosocial labor community of sorts where they were able to incorporate freedom of expression and emotional aspects while continuously performing their onboard duties.

In addition, classifying the role of the sailor on board leading the singing of shanties is relevant to the study of sailors' emotions and feelings that are mirrored in the lyricality of shanties. The role of a shantyman provided a new crew position on board a sailing vessel. The shantyman's main job was to select certain shanties, associate them with the labor being performed and lead the singing of these shanties. The format for the type of interaction between sailor and shantyman, according to Rose, followed a "call-and-response verse and chorus structure indicative of hauling shanties, and maintained the rhythm of heaving shanties" (150). As with emotions and self-expression within the identity of a sailor, the shantyman provided an outlet for these sailors, such as "growling" or showing a sense of displeasure and acted "as a 'lyrical barrister of the forecastle's real or imaginary wrongs'" (151). As such, in "Nostalgia and Imagination in Nineteenth-century Sea Shanties," Rose signifies the association with sailors' feelings, forms of self-expression and emotions to the lyricality that is found in many of the sea shanties sung by these individuals.

Furthermore, sea shanties become one with sailors' identity in how they become a necessary part of who they are. These musical forms do not just exist in part with labor, but also address the material and possible biological connections these sailors have with one another while performing such shanties. According to Jason R. Keeler et al. in "The Neurochemistry and Social Flow of Singing: Bonding and Oxytocin," there is a social flow of singing that "[w]hen experienced in group settings, flow holds the potential to facilitate social connection…" (2) and "[p]eople experiencing flow find themselves completely immersed in the present activity, so intensely focused that all unrelated thoughts and emotions seemingly disappear from their conscious being, allowing for efficient yet effortless execution of thoughts and actions" (3). The sailors on board these sailing vessels bring about unity and this "social flow" is brought about when their emotions are connected with that of the act of singing sea shanties. As such, without the attitude and sea shanties during a performance of labor, the will to work is flawed and acts as a continuous form of labor that feels just like what it is: labor and not expressive communal engagement.

In addition to connecting emotion with expression and wanting to perform sea shanties, sea shanties themselves are personal relics to sailors' lives and their self-identity. Shanties become an almost necessary component that extends beyond themselves and that is interconnected with who they are on board a ship. Dana recounts how shanties (or sailors' songs) are prominent in the daily lives of these sailors and a vital part of themselves as individual sailors by expressing how:

> The sailors' songs for capstans and falls are of a peculiar kind, having a chorus at the end of each line. The burden is usually sung by one alone, and, at the chorus,

> all hands join in,—and the louder the noise, the better. With us, the chorus seemed almost to raise the decks of the ship, and might be heard at a great distance, ashore. A song is as necessary to sailors as the drum and fife to a soldier. They can't pull in time, or pull with a will, without it. (250)

The activity of singing while at the capstans is engaging and gives the sailors an almost purpose for being on the ship doing the physical activity that they have to do together as "all hands join in…" (250). By Dana using the words "with us," he is saying that singing may be unique to their own group of sailors. It is what makes them who they are. The raising of the decks gives life to the ship. It brings about the purpose of giving life to the body of a vessel as Dana goes on throughout the narrative by using the pronouns, "her" and "she" to refer to the ships he sees and the one he is on. In addition, the amount of sound that permeates from the chorus is heard from a great distance ashore. The power of the sound implies that the shanty is heard on board and also heard on the land by others. While hearing the shanty may give a sense of curiosity to those on land, it gives a sense of pride for the sailors on board. They give it their all and show the world outside their vessel that they are proud of who they are and the work that they are doing, no matter how physically exhausting the labor may be. It gives them encouragement and a feeling of belonging.

Moreover, the power of vocal harmony is evident to the characterizing power of sea shanties and their purposes other than just work songs. As stated by Deke Sharon in *The Heart of Vocal Harmony: Emotional Expression in Group Singing*, the form of vocal harmony is represented by "[t]he term 'a cappella' literally mean[ing] 'in the chapel style,' and a cappella music is woven through Western culture, from Gregorian chant…to

madrigals, sea shanties, field hollers…" (6). Vocal harmony creates a communal power that is allowed to be heard on board and on land where "there is something spiritual about the sound of voices together….There is something supremely affecting about the experiencing of hearing people creating something beautiful together with only their voices, communicating thoughts and feelings through vocal harmony" (6). It is with these emotional thoughts and feelings that the sailors on board sailing vessels contribute to their connection to themselves and the labor they are performing. The words they express and the flow of music that is presented when singing these shanties is evident in the power that these shanties emanate. The voice of sailors becomes such a vital part of the labor being done on board and while instruments could prove to be louder and more engaging, "singers have the edge when it comes to emotion, especially when they are emoting as a unit" (6). Unity creates community and creates bonding within the sailors on board. In turn, sea shanties then work as more than just a work song and are repurposed for engagement, motivation and discovering of self while out at sea.

As sea shanties, while the main purpose is to enrich the labor that is being produced on board, they create emotions and other forms of self-expression that are brought into play when these musical forms are performed by sailors, such as the lyricality of certain sea shanties that evoke thoughts of earthly desires (women, drinking, etc.) to then reiterate the fact that these sea shanties are more than work songs. Nostalgia allows sailors to bring themselves onto the past and remember the ways of living on earthly terrain and how that shaped them into what they are now: sailors. According to Rose, as sailors, they have a united identity on board a sailing vessel, where even "[t]hough ship crews were often comprised of men from diverse backgrounds, the

seamen engaged in singing shanties were united in the common condition of being a sailor" (153). The "common condition" is that which gives meaning and purpose to the sailors' lives. It is what brings them together in a community that is separated, yet still entwined with the desires of the land (as shared through the lyricality of such shanties). While they may come from different cultures and backgrounds, they all share the identity of being a sailor as they perform strenuous labor on board a ship. In all, their unity comes to the forefront and "[r]egardless of their origin or their shore lives, all ordinary seamen were included in the common expression of the shanty" (153). As a whole, sea shanties then form a "collective and inclusive nature…" (153). Since sailors did not have anyone to perform these shanties to, they created a performance that was shared through themselves and as such, "[t]he lyrics of shanties are intentional messages of sailors, meant for no other ears than their own…to the seamen that originally sang them, they were far more introspective" (153). Since "[t]hese songs were performed *by* the common sailor [and] performed *for* the common sailor" (153), it created a furthering of community on board sailing vessels where sailors had these personal connections with the shanties that they sang. A sense of introspectiveness is evident throughout the words that the shanties are composed of.

The shanty then erases that of just a purpose for work, but for a collective means of nostalgia, imagination, and expression of the sailor. The sailor related himself onto the shanty and vice versa. For the purpose of nostalgia in it of itself, it serves to create a past remembrance and the continuation of this past time that can still be kept going in the present time. In connection with sailors and their lives on board and on land, Rose states how "nostalgic expression happens out of a desire to escape the harsh and disappointing

present, and a public sense of hopelessness that things are likely to improve. Nostalgia offers escapism and hope that things in the future may be as good as they were in the past" (152). These concepts of nostalgic expression are mirrored in the very act of singing sea shanties while performing labor. It is during the present time of performing the shanties that the sailors' minds are entwined at the moment that they are taking part in and by creating reminiscences through the words, phrases and other expressions in the shanties they are singing. According to John Funchion in *Novel Nostalgias: The Aesthetics of Antagonism in Nineteenth Century U.S. Literature*, "[a]s a sensational, cognitive, and imaginative phenomenon, nostalgia straddles what many see as the divisions among affect, emotion, and feeling" (15). As such, nostalgia creates a disconnection with the labor and allows for continued labor to be performed. It transports sailors to a time in their lives when such emotional happiness is present, which then grants them the ability to continue labor, while not forgetting their past lives.

Even if the lyrics of such shanties may not have always been consistent or made to have a clear sense, the sound emanating from them garnered continued effort and emotional strength for these sailors. Without their usability, sailors would maintain a focal point on the labor itself and their mindsets and physical bodies would not be readily available in the execution of tasks and duties on board a ship. Singing the shanties and allowing the words to correspond to the type of work that is being performed allows these sailors to take a glimpse into their past desires and pleasures that were once shared between them and other individuals. According to Rose, it is with these elements that take place "[i]n looking back to real or imagined places, people, or things, sailors sought to connect the present to the past" (152). By constantly connecting their past

remembrances, sailors showed their lifted sense while singing shanties and allowed them to take their main focus off the labor and in turn, on their desires, pleasures, objects, etc. According to Bryan Sinche in "Time, at Sea: Temporality and *Two Years Before the Mast*," "[t]o be a sailor in the nineteenth century was to be an outcast, both spatially and temporally…" (380). A sense of time is rather lost when on board a sailing vessel. Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* "becomes a struggle to escape one temporal mode and return to the familiar one he left behind" (389). In other words, the shanties prove to be this connection between the home and the sea. They prove to interact with "[t]his desire to escape from 'sailor time,'" (389). The "sailor time" that these sailors experience on board sailing vessels contributes to the time that is being sung about in their shanties. The longing for these sailors is there, and it brings them a tie to that space.

Sailors being able to create this form of expression when singing these shanties allows for the homosocial environment to rise to the surface. Having a homosocial environment invokes the "voice from the forecastle" that Dana reiterates as being a necessary factor in portraying these sailors' lives during a sailing voyage. As such, in performing these shanties, the alleviation of labor is evidenced through the themes in the shanties, "Whiskey, Johnny" and "Cheerily Men." With these shanties, the lyrics themselves create a story and an expressive description of what these sailors tie to their own minds and ways of thinking. In "Leave Her, Johnny," there are many variations as to the word choice used in the song. As an oral tradition, sea shanties garner the characteristic of being unable to trace back to a specific origin in which the lyrics were composed. Since the creation of such words, phrases, and various other inclusions was up to the discretion of the shantyman, there were never consistent lyrics for "Leave Her,

Johnny" and other sea shanties as well. The lyrics for "Leave Her, Johnny" were composed as follows:

O the times are hard and the wages low,

Leave her, Johnny, leave her!

I think it's time for us to go!

An' it's time for us to leave her!

O I thought I heard the old man say,

Tomorrow ye will get your pay!

It's rotten beef an' weev'ly bread,

It's pump or drown the old man said.

The wind was foul an' the sea ran high,

She shipped it green an' none went by. ("Sea Chanteys" 7)

By appropriating the use of the word "her" and connecting it to the ship itself, it shows an almost relief that these sailors feel at the end of their sailing voyage. The specific shanty served purposes, such as to give sailors a way of expressing their grievances about experiences while on such a sailing voyage and removing themselves from the ship. "Leave Her, Johnny" is a shanty which allows sailors to express troubles that were on board, such as when "[t]he wind was foul an' the sea ran high" (7). It is also necessary to attribute the sailors' work with that of an end result, that of a monetary gain, as for the sailors, "[t]omorrow ye will get your pay!" (7). This particular shanty expresses the annoyances on board but also allows sailors to express something that they have to look forward to in the near future because of the work they did that was accompanied by shanties themselves. While not completely leaving their journey behind them, they are

able to be relieved of such instances and hardships while out at sea. It is with a shanty like this one that they can come to terms with when returning to land.

In “Cheerily Men,” women’s qualities are praised, and the sailors engage in remembrance that allows them to think back to certain acts performed with this ideal image of a woman, but only in the past or in the future:

Oh, Nancy Dawson, I-Oh.

Chee-lee men.

She robb’d the Bo’sun, I-Oh.

Chee-lee men.

That was a caution, I-Oh.

Chee-lee men.

Oh Hauly, I-Oh,

Chee-lee men. (Terry 37)

The particular section of the shanty, where the woman, Nancy Dawson, is being expressed shows the correlation with the desire for women as these sailors had when performing such work songs. These pleasures come as limited and show that while these pleasures are what motivated sailors, it can never be perfect as they continue their sailing voyages and also because, at the present time, there is still labor to be performed. Also, the lack of women on board sailing vessels constitutes this very instance of why such a shanty with these lyrics of a woman is expressed, articulated and composed. In turn, if the sailors are constantly singing that particular shanty, then the longing for women becomes a central part of a sailor’s life and what it is that makes them who they are. It is possible that the inclusion of “Cheerily, Men” in Dana’s work emulates this very factor in such a

life of a sailor by it being repeated throughout various instances in the narrative. The pleasures translate to the experiences at sea as Dana describes how

> [o]ur spirits returned with having something to do…we struck up "Cheerily ho!" in full chorus. This pleased the mate, who rubbed his hands and cried out…and the captain came up, on hearing the song, and said to the passenger, within hearing of the man at the wheel, "That sounds like a lively crew. They'll have their song so long as there're enough left for a chorus!" (299)

"Cheerily, Men" becomes a prominent song throughout *Two Years Before the Mast* and associates the emotion of happiness with the expression of the song. For example, when Dana and crew were homebound "[they] came to mast-head the top sail yards, with all hands at the halyards, [they] struck up 'Cheerily, men,' with a chorus which might have been heard half way to Staten Land" (312). A constant song expression shows a desire for happiness and cheerfulness among the crew. In turn, the performance of labor with such songs is correlated with the desires and expressions that are contained within the lyrics of them and mirror what the sailors are feeling at the time.

In turn, a cultural exchange then creates a sense of community within that of the musical practices and performances that took place on board sailing vessels. It creates a unified form, while still appropriating those influences on the causations of other musical cultures. While there may be various multiracial and multinational identities on board a sailing vessel, the homosocial unity in these shanties brings about the flexibility and attentiveness in relation to each identity's differences and similarities. While shanties were sung by British sailors starting in the sixteenth century, American shanties are derived from British antecedents, but with influences from African American common

uses by slave and ex-slave labor on ships and docks. As such, they include having origination from the blackface minstrel stage or plantation songs (N. Cohen 100). The origination and historical influences on the creations and performances of sea shanties are a result of the fact that geographical associations are what make the sea shanty what it came to be. As with American whaling ships being one of the main types of sailing that gained cultural and international influences, "[t]he whalers' soundscape was dense and diverse—folk and popular songs from the British Isles; songs and tunes from American minstrelsy; European polkas, schottisches, and mazurkas; African American banjo and fiddle tunes…and many more genres and subgenres of folk and popular music" (Carr 68).

In Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, the cultural exchange is illustrated by the many interactions with the cultures meshed on board. For example, Dana recounts the variety of songs presented to him and other crew members: "Several of the Italians slept on shore at their hide-house; and there, we had some very good singing almost every evening. The Italians sang a variety of songs—barcarollas, provincial airs, &c.; in several of which I recognised parts of our favorite operas and sentimental songs" (221). While Dana talks about singing in general in the above passage, he particularly makes reference to the types of songs being sung by different groups, such as Italians. Likewise, Dana speaks about Pacific Islanders and "[t]hat which strikes a stranger most peculiarly is their style of singing….They sing about persons and things which are around them…different men….They have great powers of ridicule, and are excellent mimics; many of them discovering and imitating the peculiarities of our own people, before we had seen them ourselves" (143). By bringing about various cultural groups in the act of singing these

shanties, Dana reiterates the homosocial space that is present in a ship. Having all these cultures meshing in the unity of singing allows for the homosocial desire to expand upon itself to not just one group of men but to many different groups of men in the open space of a sailing vessel.

As such, cultures like that of Hawaiian voices created an elevated form of influence for American sailors and their singing on board a ship. While their influences may have initially served as limited, according to James Revell Carr in *Hawaiian Music in Motion: Mariners, Missionaries, and Minstrels*, by trying to be "tamed" and being classified as the exaggerated and "wild" attributed voices of the Hawaiians in Honolulu, "on board American and European ships on the California coast Hawaiians were valued for their voices, leading sailors in sea [shanties] and singing comic songs to entertain the cosmopolitan crews of international ships (Dana)" (6). According to Carr, since shanties were taken from many types of influences, languages, individuals, etc., Hawaiians in the nineteenth century also "had no lack of musical skill or ability to adapt Western musical ideas, and they took those ideas from a wide range of sources. They then turned around and introduced their own musical adaptations into Western culture, inspiring new sounds that have shaped modern American music" (6). By introducing their own musical influences, it allows for a shared commonality and allows for the lineage of sea shanties to trace back to these cultures, groups of people, practices, etc. A "shared community" is what brings together a commonality between these sailors. The common activity of singing shanties increases their desire to be with one another at any given time. The enclosure of a ship allows for that connection to strengthen with or without singing being present. The shanties themselves are a force that allows for a common activity to bring

about a homosocial presence on board a ship. The ship space then allows for their desire for togetherness in times of both relaxation/pleasure and labor.

Merging Dana and Melville through Homosocial Labor and Intimacy

Dana introduces homosociality through the use of sea shanties, common songs sung by sailors in times of labor and relaxation. In incorporating Melville into the literary discussion, Dana begins to configure a representation of homosocial and queer themes that are later established and further developed in Melville's *Moby-Dick*. The intimacy that is found in performing these shanties among sailors is evident through the interactions these men have with each other. As such, the interactions between Ishmael and Queequeg are evaluated in terms of homosexual undertones that are found between them and with other sailors throughout the novel, in the next chapter of the thesis. An example of the forming bonds of intimacy that are found in Dana's narrative is the connection formed between Dana and Hope. Hope, the Pacific Islander, is someone who Dana has the most affection for as he was "[his] favorite among all of them, and one who was liked by both officers and men…" (141). Also, Dana "[taking] care of him when he was ill, getting medicines from the ship's chests, when no captain or officer would do anything for him," (141) showed how much Dana cared for Hope and his well-being, something that Hope "never forgot" (141). This embodied connection with one another is a representation of the more visual and physical connection that is seen with Ishmael and Queequeg in *Moby-Dick*.

HEATING HOMOSOCIAL BONDS IN MELVILLE

If Richard Henry Dana represents sailors' homosocial voice from the forecastle, then Herman Melville reignites that voice by heating sailors' homosocial bonds. That is, Melville's *Moby-Dick* is a response to Dana's call to represent physicality and the labor of men's deep-sea society. For Melville, the inherent need for "heat" with these homosocial bonds explicitly contributes to the way these bonds were expressed between sailors on land and on board a sailing vessel. Indeed, Melville wrote a letter to Dana in these terms during the completion of *Moby-Dick*. Melville expresses:

> About the "whaling voyage"—I am half way in the work, & am very glad your suggestion so jumps with mine. It will be a strange sort of book, tho', I fear; blubber is blubber you know; tho' you may get oil out of it, the poetry runs as hard as sap from a frozen maple tree;—& to cook the thing up, one must needs throw in a little fancy, which from the nature of the thing, must be ungainly as the gambols of the whales themselves. Yet I mean to give the truth of the thing, spite of this. (qtd. in Parker 724)

Both Dana and Melville have a connection by sharing "the truth of the thing." Having Dana bring about one form of homosocial bonding through singing, Melville extracts that bonding and forms it into a physical presence between sailors that can be seen throughout his novel. Melville's desire turns to creating a "strange sort of book" that ultimately erects an "ungainly," yet elevated homosocial connection between sailors. Melville wants to get to the "truth" not by clarity and normalcy but from "strangeness." As Hester Blum confirms, "Melville's work exemplifies oceanic ways of being: he is invested in modes of thinking and writing that are unbounded by expected affiliations, forms, nations, mores,

or doctrines" ("Melville and Oceanic Studies" 24). For Melville, explicitly showing the "truth" requires manifesting those desires of these men when in close proximity to one another. In terms of "heating" these desires, the whale blubber constitutes the maritime labor experience as the act of whaling requires rendering. In manifestation, the use of imagination, aesthetics, and narrative breaks down and translates that experience into something that is tangible and represented through a sailor's intimacy. The "heating" of the "thing" by Melville reiterates that there is an actual sailor's intimacy, but that intimacy itself needs to be uncovered in an alternate way by showing how these men perform labor with one another and how they form concentrated connections and relationships. These notions then become a necessary factor in viewing Melville's work in this chapter, as *Moby-Dick* brings about a value of storytelling that is enveloped in Dana's work, but further enlightened by the work of Melville. With this, the works of Dana and Melville work together in creating a literary foundation by showing how these sailors contributed to each other's own emotions and forms of intimacy.

Melville's shared foundation with Dana is best introduced through their respective depictions of song on board sailing vessels. Singing, as Dana portrays in his narrative, enhances the intimacy of the homosocial labor being performed. While Melville often presents this intimacy in much more visceral terms, he also brings about a connection between sailors that can best be strengthened through singing. Relatively early on in the voyage of the *Pequod*, Melville presents "Midnight, Forecastle," a chapter that is based entirely on shanties that is presented in the format of a play. Melville begins the chapters with the speaker's label and stage directions: "HARPOONERS AND SAILORS," "(*Foresail rises and discovers the watch standing, lounging, leaning, and lying in various*

attitudes, all singing in chorus.), and "(*Sings, and all follow*)" (138). This chapter is an insinuation of Dana's "voice from the forecastle" that is pronounced in his work, since Melville applies a sing and response action by these sailors. It becomes a performative and concrete gesture that allows for inclusivity of singing and cultural voices in an encompassing manner. As such, Melville establishes each sailor identity by clearly recognizing each sailor: Nantucket sailor, Dutch sailor, French sailor, Iceland sailor, Maltese sailor, etc. This is an act of sentimentality, and in turn, is an act of homosociality. By naming each sailor's cultural origination, Melville is further developing a homosocial community of diverse male sailors that with their presence, keeps the labor on board a sequential and focused venture. Likewise, as previously discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, Carr mentions the cultural influences and diversity of singing and the connection to shanties. With a culturally diverse onboard crew, the act of singing then brings about a homosocial deepening that is seen with these sailors. Having different cultural originations brings about a diverse interaction that these sailors face with one another and reiterates the bonds of homosociality that the act of singing a united shanty creates.

Furthermore, to have this concrete labor performed, the addition of song (shanties) is evident here as a tool for collaborating intimacy. The addition brings a deeper homosocial desire, where "heat" is brought into the forefront in creating these desires through the use of song and then, as later discussed, through intimate-physical connections between two individual sailors. In this particular instance in "Midnight, Forecastle," Melville presents each sailor singing together in chorus:

Our captain stood upon the deck,

A spy-glass in his hand,

A viewing of those gallant whales

That blew at every strand.

Oh, your tubs in your boats, my boys,

And by your braces stand,

And we'll have one of those fine whales,

Hand, boys, over hand!

So, be cheery, my lads! May your hearts never fail!

While the bold harpooner is striking the whale! (138)

In connection to Dana, where he expresses how much of an effect the shanty, "Cheerily, Men" has on his crew, it brings about a drive to continue laboring and having a set force on board that creates happiness. In Melville, the song itself establishes this notion of a continuous effort for laboring, where "[s]o, be cheery, my lads! may your hearts never fail!" (138) creates this bond between each singing sailor to combat negative feelings and embark on their journey to capture Moby-Dick. The homosocial desire is then further created here as the chorus motivates these sailors to perform the rigors of their labor and also encourages them to keep close with one another as they perform this labor. As Melville shows, even Ishmael understands the power of the homosocial presence on a sailing vessel where he "[is] one of that crew; [his] shouts had gone up with the rest; [his] oath had been welded with theirs; and stronger [he] shouted, and more did [he] hammer and clinch [his] oath…" (144). Ishmael is bound with these men in their outlook on labor. Melville then offers a more systematic view on the closeness of these bonds through specific characters throughout the novel, *Moby-Dick*. As such, throughout the narrative,

Melville continues to represent intimacy mainly in the form of two characters: Ishmael and Queequeg.

Melville's representation of the shanty bridges the two more explicitly heated scenes of homosocial labor and desire that are the focus of this chapter: Ishmael and Queequeg as a "cosy, loving pair" and the entire crew as part of an orgiastic "squeeze of the hand." In my first section, I will be discussing the evolving queerness that pertains to Ishmael and Queequeg, where Ishmael's dislike for Queequeg slowly turns into a desirous focus of Queequeg. In the second section, the discussion of the more intimate strand of homosocial labor in terms of squeezing sperm will be discussed in combination with Ishmael's point of view of the entire transcendental experience. By ending this chapter with Melville's letter to Hawthorne, it recaptures the essence of the letter Melville wrote to Dana about how he would go about creating *Moby-Dick* into a recognizable admittance of homosocial desire by Hawthorne that Melville acknowledges.

From Dislike to Intimacy: The Evolving Queerness of Ishmael and Queequeg

In relating queerness to *Moby-Dick*, the interpretation of Ishmael and Queequeg (and Ishmael and Queequeg as a dynamic relationship and force) is prominent to the study of what it means to be queer. Having a meaning of what it means to be queer is essential to the understanding of this bond, where it is "by definition *whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers.* It is an identity without an essence. 'Queer' then, demarcates not a positively but a positionality *vis-à-vis* the normative…" (Sullivan 43). The text of *Moby-Dick*, then presents a vessel for interpretations that are not based on just one definite factor, but many different aspects coming together to create various meanings "that

[have] the potential to challenge normative knowledges and identities" (44). As characters, Ishmael and Queequeg present different, yet similar identities where otherness is associated with their behaviors, interactions and attitudes. In turn, as it is "in the face of a resolved and insistent unknowability, it remains clear that Queer *means*" (47) and how "*Moby-Dick* is a postmodern novel in the same way that queerness is a postmodern concept: They both do not try to achieve holistic meaning but celebrate the psychological fragmentation and organic fluidity of (postmodern) subjectivity. Constant re-evaluation is what keeps both *Moby-Dick* and queerness alive and kicking" (Hartner 179). If queerness remained defined and identified with finitude, then queerness would not then be what it is: to constantly be meaning, interpreted and brought into focal knowledge and re-evaluations.

The initiating relationship on land between Ishmael and Queequeg that is developed in the confines of a public (an inn), yet private space (a bedroom), have queer representations. While queer could be that of homosexuality, the strangeness that is shown by Queequeg to Ishmael continues to reiterate that of the other and its representations. As a result, the difference between that of just having a homosocial relationship or that of a relationship with queer undertones is present in the complex relationship between these two characters. The strangeness of Queequeg is acknowledged by Ishmael, yet that "strangeness" is what makes the interpretations of these characters queer in it of itself. In other words, the mere fact that these two men are involved in a relationship who become shipmates is bound to be a queer form of a relationship.

The question between Ishmael and Queequeg having a physical, homosexual relationship could remain in speculation, but the idea that Ishmael starts to realize who

Queequeg is as a person is important. For example, before Ishmael starts to gain a liking to Queequeg, Ishmael's immediate uncomfortableness is displayed. Melville even shows how Ishmael regards the strangeness as queer itself by expressing how "[a]ll these queer proceedings increased my uncomfortableness, and seeing him now exhibiting strong symptoms of concluding his business operations, and jumping into bed with me, I thought it was high time, now or never, before the light was put out, to break the spell into which I had so long been bound" (32–33). The "queer proceedings" that Ishmael mentions are those of Queequeg's activities that Ishmael witnesses, where Queequeg "seemed to be praying in a sing-song or else singing some pagan psalmody or other, during which his face twitched about in the most unnatural manner" (32). The strangeness in Queequeg's activities presents a discomfort by Ishmael. It becomes a constant internal battle with Ishmael as Queequeg's mere strangeness becomes an object of desire, attraction and curiousness.

Melville creates an initial resistance of Ishmael sleeping in the same bed with Queequeg since Ishmael expresses how "[n]o man prefers to sleep two in a bed. In fact, you would a good deal rather not sleep with your own brother. I don't know how it is, but people like to be private when they are sleeping…" (27). As stated in "Strange Sensations: Sex and Aesthetics in 'The Counterpane'" by Christopher Looby, "Melville's carefully mounted drama of intimate physical sensation in 'The Counterpane' aims to induce his readers to dwell imaginatively among bodies, pleasures, and sensual indulgences, to elicit in his readers memories and fantasies of sensations and relations that had been until recently blamelessly available to men together" (71–72). This chapter produces the thoughts, emotions, etc. that Ishmael contains within himself when

experiencing the touch from another man. The emphasis on that of the male is present in Ishmael's words as he speaks of sleeping next to a man and not a woman. However, he then makes a generalization of how everyone prefers to be private when they are sleeping.

The private space, as Ishmael puts it, is disrupted by Queequeg entering into that private space. In this attitude, a "homosexual panic" is present whereas Hartner relates to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, denotes "the situation in which a man while becoming aware of attraction to another man resorts to paranoia" (184). Tension is created by Ishmael's initial reaction and observation of Queequeg. Melville's choice of narration in the placement of passages is crucial to this relationship, since Ishmael describes Queequeg in such an expression, but then goes against his own desires by negating any form of desire to sleep with Queequeg in the same bed. It is important to note that the initial physical intimacy is brought forward even before they make bodily contact. Looby expresses that there is a "fetishism" that is seen through Ishmael, where "Queequeg's clothing…offers Ishmael a fantasmatic premonitory contact with the absent harpooner, a sort of dress rehearsal of their coming physical intimacy" (73–74). Even the senses are put into a curious outlook on the individual man that Ishmael is awaiting, where "[*l*]*ooking* at the poncho and *feeling* it, to be sure, might qualify as mere curiosity; *sniffing* it, and characterizing it as thick, shaggy, and damp, then putting it on, however, edges toward delicious perversity" (74). The act of engaging with this article of clothing predetermines the close interaction where everything of Queequeg will be present and touching Ishmael's body.

Moreover, Ishmael attains a homosexual panic where there is a fear of being consumed by the other, according to Hartner, "[b]ecause Ishmael cannot express his fears of homosexuality directly (simply because he lacks the terminology for this 20th-century concept), he unconsciously translates them into fears of cannibalism" (184). Melville's aim in correlating cannibalism as a closeness for this related "panic" further signifies how "oceans and seas are sites of beauty and pleasure—solitude, desire, and resistance" (Tinsley 192). The dynamic relationship of Ishmael and Queequeg represent these ideals as the fascination of Queequeg is obstructed by Ishmael's resistance to appreciating the beauty of Queequeg's body and as stated by Caleb Crain in "Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's Novels," "[w]hen a man becomes aware, however liminally, of attraction to another man, he resorts to paranoia and projection….It is a desperate defense. The attraction becomes revulsion, horror, and even violence" (33). Melville engages with a "desperate defense" as seen in Ishmael's expressions of his resistance to having to sleep with another man in the same bed as he expresses: "The more I pondered over this harpooner, the more I abominated the thought of sleeping with him. It was fair to presume that being a harpooner, his linen or woolen, as the case might be, would not be of the tidiest, certainly none of the finest. I began to twitch all over" (27). Ishmael tries to resist any type of mindful awareness towards Queequeg, but he cannot. Queequeg is described and othered by Ishmael, but he does not try to enact a sense of manhood of a nineteenth-century individual man because he lives by his own standards and self-identity, according to Hartner (185). The identity shows that Queequeg tries to disassociate from that of the norms of his time and reconstitutes another state of

individuality. However, this brings about otherness as it is reiterated by Ishmael's standoffish nature towards Queequeg and his strangeness.

It is as if Queequeg contains this power over Ishmael that Ishmael cannot get rid of. His first locked gaze at Queequeg constitutes this locking of one onto the other. The separation that grants togetherness until the very end of the novel when Queequeg dies. The separation and trying for resistance are unavoidable and challenging. As such, Ishmael tries to make associations with Queequeg's "linen" as being the "tidiest." This further goes with his sense of resistance by finding other aspects to individualize with that of Queequeg. It removes the sense that there is the physical body that Ishmael is turned to. By appropriating that of garments, removed from the body and then brought onto the body, Ishmael tries to keep the resistance going and avoiding the body of which he is drawn to. It becomes so removed by Ishmael that his own body expresses a physical reaction to that thought of sleeping in the same bed with another man. It is almost as if Ishmael's mind wants to totally negate any interaction with Queequeg and instead turns to physical inanimate objects even though those objects themselves are still part of Queequeg's personal property.

Again, the order of passages being presented is important as Melville constitutes strangeness into familiarity. Ishmael goes from expressing his uncomfortableness in one passage to then expressing normalcy in a proceeding passage. In other words, this "normative order" that Tinsley constantly expresses in "Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage" parallels with that of Ishmael and Queequeg in how Melville shows how Ishmael describes the strangeness, yet attractiveness towards Queequeg as he comes to terms with his feelings for Queequeg: "He really did this in not

only a civil but a really kind and charitable way. I stood looking at him a moment. For all his tattooings he was on the whole a clean, comely looking cannibal. What's all this fuss I have been making about, thought I to myself—the man's a human being just as I am: he has just as much reason to fear me, as I have to be afraid of him…" (33). It is with this that even though there does not need to be any sexual contact between the two, there is this resistance that shows Ishmael finally seeing that there is no purpose in judging another man because of his otherness. In turn, the otherness that Queequeg displays produces a connection and almost attractiveness with that of Ishmael.

In regards to the concept of same-sex marriage, Melville created a world of homosexual symbolism where, as stated by Steven B. Herrmann in "Melville's Portrait of Same-Sex Marriage in *Moby-Dick*, "Melville was well aware that, to orthodox religion, to write a myth about same-sex 'marriage' would be condemned as evil from the standpoint of three monotheisms. He used his gift as a writer to express a psychological and religious truth about same-sex marriage to pre-bellum America, through the hidden language of allegory and symbol" (71). It is with this that Melville was able to allow interpretations of queerness in that of having a same-sex marriage represented by Ishmael and Queequeg through the use of "hidden language" that is reexamined, reinterpreted and continues to present differentiated meanings as that of what it means to be queer and how queerness, as stated earlier, continues to be thought of and constantly meaning.

Moreover, it is possible that Melville's interactions with other men proved to have instances of same-sex affection, love, etc. and garnered the queerness of the relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg. For example, Herrmann argues that Melville suffered two important losses in his life prior to the writing of *Moby-Dick* and the relationship

between his friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne proved to be significant as well. According to Herrmann, the first death consisted of Melville losing his father at the age of thirteen and the second death being the death of his brother and these experiences "reopened the painful father-gash in his psyche and evoked his feelings of a deep homoaffectionate longing for the two most important males in his life….Melville's medicine for this type of cumulative trauma was to be found in the seeding-Ground of the homoerotic imagination and in his relationships with men" (76). The emotion of having a "homoaffectionate longing" could be translated to Ishmael's individual character and his past history. In other words, finding Queequeg could have been that gateway and his furthering inspiration to go on a whaling journey that puts behind his past and the land he walks on. Melville's personal experiences and inspirations could have potentially framed a basis for the same-sex relationships presented in *Moby-Dick* and how those relationships showed homoeroticism in their classification and the mere expressiveness of male-male affection and even "marriage" as seen between Ishmael and Queequeg.

In addition, the symbolic nature of this same-sex marriage between Ishmael and Queequeg produces a prominent factor in that of spirituality and religion, especially as the connection between Ishmael's Christian beliefs are formed into the predisposed notion of a homonormative representation of marriage between man and woman. For example, Melville writes in Chapter 10: "A Bosom Friend," Ishmael expressing how "[he] was a good Christian; born and bred in the bosom of the infallible Presbyterian Church. How then could I unite with this wild idolator in worshipping his piece of wood?…But what is worship?—to do the will of God…to do to my fellow man what I would have my fellow man to do to me…" (52). The constant going back and forth in

Ishmael's mind expresses this longing, yet removal of Queequeg's presence. He understands that Queequeg is his "fellow man" and how Ishmael wants Queequeg to unite him with his placement of worship. Ishmael makes the act of marriage a product that is carried out in his own mind as Herrmann makes the claim that "in his literary imagination, he has in effect 'married' his *tayo*, Queequeg, in a sacrament with Polynesian, Native American, African and Islamic elements" (73). The image of marriage, as seen through Melville, in Ishmael's mind is acted out and the very act of bonding and closeness with Queequeg as he "kissed his nose, and that done, [they] undressed and went to bed, at peace with [their] own consciences and all the world" (53) is shown through a vision of "multispiritual/multicultural embrace [where] no national government, church, nor any judicial body have the power to infringe upon their human rights" (Herrmann 73). The togetherness of bodies in such a close form expressing that of affection and a loving nature alludes to sexual intimacy.

The symbolic nature of these acts manages to reiterate what Melville asserted to Dana: bring about familiarity of homosocial labor in a literary form. In turn, the act of heating *Moby-Dick* becomes an integral part of Melville's work, which it "suggests…that redemption comes through the healing function of the homoerotic imagination and the interpersonal spirit of male love and friendship between the author and fellow men" (Herrmann 76). As such, spirituality and transcendence are found in other instances in the novel where the mere act of sailing on board a vessel is a homosocial act, where transcendence within an inner being charges through to create a more desirous, intimate experience.

Queer Transcendence and Oceanic Labor

Before Melville engages with the labor force that Ishmael, Queequeg and the other sailors on board the *Pequod* face in a more intimate task, the singing aspect is introduced as seen in "Midnight, Forecastle." In having this precede the chapter, "A Squeeze of the Hand," Melville primes the intimacy that is generated through singing and ultimately brings the connection of singing to focus. The sailors are comfortable with one another when singing. They are connected with one another through the music they share. As such, the intimate laboring experience that comes about in the next chapter is something that relies on the addition of song to combat the strenuous activity of squeezing sperm from a whale. It becomes a task for Ishmael to squeeze the oil taken from the whale that was killed by the crew. The touching of each sailor's hand with Ishmael is what brings attention the most to Ishmael as he describes the act of meshing his hands with the oil and the other sailors' hands to be something that he particularly enjoys the most.

As such, notions of same-sex intimacy paired with ideas of queerness are present when Ishmael describes how the process of squeezing the lumps present in sperm are transformed back to fluid. It is with this experience on board a sailing vessel that "[t]he eroticized friendship between Ishmael and Queequeg is replaced by the affectionate male togetherness of the workers on board the whaling ship" (Hartner 186). There is a "replacement" since after going on board the *Pequod*, Ishmael and Queequeg's intimate relationship is put on hold as they start their whaling voyage. The intimacy that is seen between Ishmael and Queequeg is translated to the entire crew as this labor process of squeezing the sperm embarks on a bonding experience in a homosocial atmosphere that

showcases the desires for one another in close proximity. Also, Ishmael's gaze for Queequeg is somewhat altered as "Ishmael's descriptions move away from the phallic nature of Queequeg's cultural regalia to the phallicism that Ishmael sees in the work on board the *Pequod* and in the nature of the whale" (Hartner 186).

Furthermore, the physicality of the sperm squeezing is brought into focus as Ishmael and the rest of the crew engage in this hands-on process. Melville describes Ishmael's duty of squeezing the sperm to be of the utmost importance as he says how "[i]t was our business to squeeze these lumps back into fluid" (308). The descriptiveness of the sperm itself translates to the transcendent experience when the performance of such squeezing is done by Ishmael and the rest of the crew on board the *Pequod*, where it was described as "[a] sweet and unctuous duty! No wonder that in old times this sperm was such a favorite cosmetic. Such a clearer! such a sweetener! such a softener! such a delicious mollifier!" (308). Ishmael goes on to describe his own personal experience detached from that of his experience with the other men while performing the action, where "[a]fter having [his] hands in it for only a few minutes, [his] fingers felt like eels, and began, as it were, to serpentine and spiralize" (308). The description of Ishmael's own personal connection with the sperm is a foreshadow for the experience that he is going to participate in with the other crew members.

The passage that follows is the main central focus of the homosocial nature that is found on board the *Pequod* and the interactions that are prominent with Ishmael and the other members of the whaling ship:

> Squeeze! squeeze! squeeze! all the morning long; I squeezed that sperm till I myself almost melted into it; I squeezed that sperm till a strange sort of insanity

> came over me; and I found myself unwittingly squeezing my co-laborers' hands in it, mistaking their hands for the gentle globules. Such an abounding, affectionate, friendly, loving-feeling did this avocation beget; that at last I was continually squeezing their hands, and looking up into their eyes sentimentally; as much as to say,—Oh! my dear fellow beings, why should we longer cherish any social acerbities, or know the slightest ill-humor or envy! Come; let us squeeze hands all round; nay, let us all squeeze ourselves into each other; let us squeeze ourselves universally into the very milk and sperm of kindness. (309)

The mere act of squeezing the sperm brings about a transcendental experience for Ishmael. It was almost as if "that sperm" had this overbearing power on Ishmael that it was impossible to put it into words accurately. The passage itself presents an erotic form of brotherhood, in a sense, and allows Ishmael to bond and associate on a deeper level with these men on board. The act of meshing Ishmael's hands with the "gentle globules" and the other laborers' hands brings about unity and relates to his relationship with Queequeg at the beginning of the novel. Their intense connection then forms what Ishmael is feeling in this scene with his fellow sailors.

The sense of touch is prominent here and associates "gentle" with the sailors' hands. Even if this is a laborious activity, a man's presence to Ishmael is somewhat calming and creates a sentimental notion that is probably scattered throughout a sailor's life, but it is during moments like these that it tends to become more intense and amplified. In Ishmael's description, "[s]uch an abounding, affectionate, friendly, loving feeling did this avocation beget; that at last I was continually squeezing their hands, and looking up into their eyes sentimentally" (309), the words "affectionate," "friendly" and

"loving" bring about a sort of complex integration with varying degrees of meaning. It is interesting to note that it is possible that the order of the words is important, where being affectionate constitutes friendliness and then that friendship brings about a loving nature that Ishmael then feels towards all these men around him. The order also mirrors the initial interactions between Ishmael and Queequeg at the beginning of the novel. Ishmael first notices Queequeg's strangeness then eventually a touch factor becomes present, which then brings them closer and are formed into a "marriage."

While these notions of sentimentality and homosociality are present, the homoerotic undertones in this passage become visible as Ishmael is relating an almost sexual experience with the other crew members surrounding him. Since Ishmael and the rest of the individuals on board the *Pequod* are, in fact, confined to the social environment of the ship, they only have themselves to rely on, communicate with, interact with, etc. According to Kellen Bolt in "Squeezing Sperm: Nativism, Queer Contact, and the Futures of Democratic Intimacy in *Moby-Dick*," "Ishmael does not let the cataclysms of the *Pequod* dissuade him from embracing, embodying, and extolling queerness and foreignness. He does not stop squeezing sperm with non-American men to marry a woman on shore, at least as far as we know. Rather, squeezing sperm fortifies his commitments to queerness and foreignness, as his body indicates" (294). Ishmael's closeness with the other men is portrayed as something that is not ordinary yet proves to be a way of exerting oneself from the boundaries of the terrain while they are removed from the land.

In addition, the sexual imagery that is present in this passage, in turn, relates to the way that these homoerotic undertones come to be. It is the bounding affection and

touch of the man that brings Ishmael so close to a transcendental and spiritual "awakening." An awakening that allows him to see that a man is the companion that he is bound to on a whaling vessel who are separate from the women who are living on land. It allows Ishmael to experience something new and not always have the constraints of a society brought onto him. In "The Serious Functions of Melville's Phallic Jokes," Robert Shulman states that Ishmael uses "sexual…imagery to satirize and reject the social norms of the respectable community and to wryly affirm another radically unorthodox alternative—here, a quite conventional and social despised kind of 'sociality'" (184). It is with this resistance that Ishmael becomes further removed from the restrictions of society and allows himself to garner a newly found experience from the moment he met Queequeg to the moment he embarked on the whaling journey. The "brotherly love" that is present in this passage is not a type that is approved of in Anglo-American communities and it is that even though "[t]he conventional ideas of sociality, love, and comradeship are there…they are deliberately associated with homosexuality or—what is equally offensive to those who accept conventional social standards—with bisexuality" (184). These "conventional ideas" become present, while Melville brings about the associations with the homosexuality present in the passage. Ishmael feels himself having such a different experience and "the process of squeezing the lumps of sperm into fluid, [he] feels himself carried away" (184). By having such a feeling as being carried away, the uplifted feeling and emotion creates a sense of going against, as stated before, the confines of a terraneous environment onto the oceanic environment that presents a way for sailors to garner new intimate experiences between men.

It is important to note the passage after this main passage where Ishmael states that even though he could continue squeezing the sperm for a long time, "in all cases man must eventually lower, or at least shift, his conceit of attainable felicity; not placing it anywhere in the intellect or the fancy; but in the wife, the heart, the bed, the table, the saddle…" (309) shows that there is always the potential to come back to the heteronormative presence. It is in this statement that Ishmael acknowledges outside ventures of a sailor's life other than having whale labor as the center of their lives. The inclusion of a wife shows that these men may be involved with a woman, but then that separation would grant a closer bond with the men they associate with on board a ship hunting whales. Melville rejects normative masculinity and provides physical intimacy as the central point, which still follows that "transcendental experience" with the notion of a "normative masculinity," since the "felicity" of man must be bounded "in the wife, the heart, the bed, the table, the saddle, the fire-side, the country…" (309). These factors, including that of the wife, the bed, the country, are all inclusive of the masculine normativity that Melville tries to reject, yet follows that passage of going against it with a passage that relates Ishmael's thinking back to the way a man "should" be in the heteronormative scape.

Furthermore, the very act of squeezing the sperm symbolizes a sexual experience between men, according to Ruud Welten in "On the Hospitality of Cannibals," where "[t]he 'squeeze of the hand' stands for male masturbation, which places the obsession with the sperm whale in *Moby-Dick* in an altogether light" (146). This alluding to "mutual masturbation" was present, where "[i]n whaleships, to be sure, men found a degree of provisional privacy sufficient for mutually desired sexual acts…that in the navy

mutual masturbation was commonplace (sodomy much less so)" (Parker 207). Likewise, "[a]ccording to Van Buskirk, masturbation was something sailors did routinely—with, for, and to each other" (Knip 372). While the physical act of mutual masturbation was not present in this particular instance, the mere representation constitutes a form of it and the sexual desires on board a whaling vessel, where these men were removed from the confines of life on land.

Moreover, evaluating sailor intimacy, sexual desires and more specifically, eroticism, relates to the activities of male bonding that is seen throughout both oceanic narratives of Dana and Melville. More specifically, nineteenth-century sailor culture revolves around the idea that these men labored nearly entirely with other men. The closeness of men constitutes the homosocial community in it of itself that is present, but what occurs inside that homosocial community is what becomes more intricate in viewing how these sailors behaved with each other. In "Homosocial Desire and Erotic *Communitas* in Melville's Imaginary: The Evidence of Van Buskirk," Matthew Knip proposes how Melville's content for his works, such as *Moby-Dick* were explorations "with a reticence that was coy, evasive, and most important to him—publishable" (359). Knip establishes the erotics of the sailor figure on a day-to-day basis based on Melville's own sailing journeys. In Knip's piece, the diaries of Van Buskirk are discussed in combination with sailor life during the nineteenth century and Melville's own literary creations. Buskirk enlisted in the Marine Corps at a young age embarking on the USS *Cumberland*, USS *Plymouth,* USS Merrimac, among others. He then later was appointed a mate in the United States Navy (Burg xix–xx). He wrote about his voyages and kept a diary, which contained intimate details throughout, even though he was a private man,

who placed value on public discretion. The erotic culture that is mentioned and portrayed by Buskirk brings about the notion of how sailors acted with one another on land and on board, in terms of physical contact and intimacy.

While there is discussion on Ishmael and Queequeg, there is, I admit, a looming figure in this analysis. Captain Ahab has this control over the crew's homosocial labor in combination with his own obsessive desire for the whale. With this, there is an intersection that troubles any view of such labor as liberating. Briefly turning to Ahab ignites a "heat," which I have been discussing, to rise hotter because of the captain's prominent and constant desire to go after Moby-Dick, the whale. The whale becomes this desirous object that Ahab becomes so infatuated with and how, according to Welten, "[i]t's not so much that Melville uses veiled language to talk about homoerotic desires, but rather that the language and the literature generate a homoerotic discourse, a discourse on 'sperm whales'" (146). In turn, as stated earlier, Melville's use of language creates these homoerotic tendencies and undertones that are present through the relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg; Ishmael and his shipmates; and Captain Ahab and the whale. In other words, the queering of such a text is made present by the language that is created by Melville and by placing it in a narrative which encompasses men on a ship with other men. The ship is then situated as a vessel for more than just whaling labor, but for same-sex desire that is not found on land as Melville repeatedly associates and characterizes the behavior between the characters in the novel.

With questions of queerness arising through the relationship of Ishmael, Queequeg and other sailors, Ahab's own queerness may be introduced for future extended analysis. Ahab both informs and complicates the homosocial heat that Melville

depicts. Ahab has this desire for the white whale, Moby-Dick. He will stop at nothing to capture this whale and regain a sense of his own self-worth and masculinity. Ahab becomes the head of the homosocial bonds these sailors are forming, as he is captain of a ship full of men who have increased homosocial desires in their closeness with each other. Melville includes in Chapter 16: "The Ship," how one of the first things Ishmael hears when Peleg signs him to ship is that "[h]e's a queer man, Captain Ahab—so some think—but a good one" (73). By doing so, there initiates a sort of tension between "queer" and "good." Ahab's queerness is identified as "good" in order to make Ishmael sign on board the sailing voyage. In other words, Ahab's queerness cannot be denied, but is a productive queerness. On the other hand, Melville portrays Stubb in Chapter 29: "Enter Ahab; to Him, Stubb" as expressing an explicit form of "queer," where "[i]t's queer; very queer; and he's queer too; aye, take him fore and aft, he's about the queerest old man Stubb ever sailed with" (106).

Moreover, Bolt proposes that "Ishmael's queer desire to squeeze sperm symbolizes the *Pequod*'s real mission that Ahab suspends: to make money by indiscriminately hunting whales, processing their corpses, and selling the byproducts" (316). Bolt further discusses the impact of a "queer contact" that Ishmael and the rest of the crew face, where Ahab and the officers do not relate to, since they are "[i]n positions of authority, they do not participate in the laborious duties of squeezing sperm, and being cut off from queer contact, the officers, such as Starbuck, do not recognize this alternative means of resistance" (317). As such, by engaging Ahab into a future discussion with queerness, it becomes a segue into a more intricate foundation of what it means for homosocial labor presented in nineteenth-century oceanic narratives.

If Melville's pre-publication letter to Dana establishes the "strangeness" of the contents of the book, his letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne after the publication of *Moby-Dick* shows that the book's unique execution was understood by Hawthorne. This letter to Hawthorne is part of a series of letters and is one where a letter with a response from Hawthorne is not available. Melville's letter to Hawthorne reiterates a sense of appreciation and understanding of how homosocial desire was the centerfold of the novel. Melville was so relieved that Hawthorne understood his book that "[a] sense of unspeakable security [was] in [him] this moment, on account of [Hawthorne] having understood the book" (qtd. in Hage 162). Melville felt connected in Hawthorne's understanding of the book. The tone of Melville's letters changed. Melville explains to Dana the heating of homosocial bonds. Hawthorne actually accepts and completely understands what is meant by heating these homosocial bonds that Melville produced in his literary creation, *Moby-Dick*, as he himself is the object of that heat.

EPILOGUE

"It's of a merchant's daughter brought up in Callao / *Hurrah, me yaller girls, doodle let me go* / She took me in the parlour and said, 'Won't you be my boy?' / *Hurrah, me yaller girls, doodle let me go* / *Doodle let me go, me girls, doodle let me go,* / *Hurrah, me yaller girls, doodle let me go*…"

—A. L. Lloyd's "Doodle Let Me Go (Yaller Girls)"
as heard in Robert Eggers' *The Lighthouse*

On October 18, 2019, Robert Eggers' *The Lighthouse* premiered. This film follows two lighthouse keepers who become stranded on a rock far away from land. The aspects of homosocial labor, singing and intimacy all intertwine in this film. The two characters, Ephraim Winslow (Robert Pattinson) and Thomas Wake (Willem Dafoe), engage in strenuous labor (more so Ephraim than Thomas). In between the madness that encompasses these men's minds, the act of singing and intimacy mesh together, which alludes to the many discussions posed by the two chapters of this thesis. For example, A. L. Lloyd's shanty, "Doodle Let Me Go (Yaller Girls)," is a prominent inclusion in this film as it becomes the backdrop for the trailer of the film and the scene where both Ephraim and Thomas sing and dance together while heavily intoxicated.

Additionally, in the closing credits of this film, the on-screen text reads: "The dialogue was inspired by and drawn from various period sources from Herman Melville to real life lightkeepers' journals, and especially, the work of Sarah Orne Jewett" (*The Lighthouse* 1:48:35). As such, there is a connection between Eggers' response to Melville and Melville's response to Dana when writing *Moby-Dick*. The inclusion of the shanties, for example, creates a full circle that enhances the correlation between each author. The legacy of shanties remains seen through visual creations that place historical value and significance as seen in such a film as *The Lighthouse.*

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