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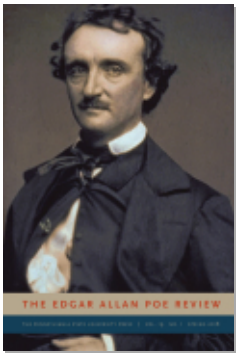

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Philip Grech

Abstract

Poe's "The Man of the Crowd" illustrates the paranoia afflicting London's urban populations in a period of mass immigration and urbanization. As the story begins, the narrator sits in a café observing people walk by. While classifying the mostly degenerate amalgamation of people into a taxonomized catalog, he identifies "a decrepid [sic] old man," who immediately captures his attention, prompting a daylong pursuit. In the end, the narrator concludes that the man is "the type and genius of deep crime." Criticism on this story often focuses on this flâneur, but when broadened to include the crowd, a "psychopathic crowd structure" is revealed. Similarly, Vicki Hester and Emily Seger's analysis of Poe's "The Black Cat" suggests that the narrator's behavior is consistent with current forensic research on psychopathy. Yet, for "The Man of the Crowd," Steven Fink identifies the flâneur as the author's version of the legendary Wandering Jew. However, when readers juxtapose the evolutionary history of psychopathy from the nineteenth century to today, alongside the political and social conditions of the nineteenth-century crowd, the paranoia and fear embedded in modern city life reveals otherwise. A breeding ground of mass suspicion between individuals—beyond the narrator and old man—is a psychopathic crowd structure in which everyone is "a man of the crowd." And despite psychology's rapid evolution in the past century, the psychopath in our world remains nearly as elusive as in Poe's.

Keywords

Poe, psychopath, crowd, urbanization, immigration

"Psychopathy" was not a term used in 1840 when Edgar Allan Poe published his short story "The Man of the Crowd" in *Atkinson's Casket* and *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*.[1] The term describes a person who lacks empathy and the capacity to feel remorse and regret; a person who engages in risky,

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reckless, and manipulative behavior, and acts with deceit to better themselves regardless of the consequences inflicted on others. Because psychopathy did not exist in Poe's time as a term, disorder, or diagnosis, it risks anachronistic application. The psychological phenomenon is not altogether new, however; its conceptual ancestor is found in nineteenth-century theories on "moral insanity": the idea that dangerous and violent people in society demonstrate no signs of illness and therefore present no apparent threat of danger. This nineteenth-century enigma of mental instability foreshadows the twenty-first-century understanding of "psychopathy." Both "moral insanity" and "psychopathy" epitomize a formless indecipherability in a person who provokes fear in the broader population. Because of their incomprehensibility, the psychopath is feared as more dangerous and threatening than other types of disturbed individuals. They appear moral, well-intentioned, and unthreatening despite their core instability and remorselessness. Consequently, one can never know if the psychopath is present among them. This psychological profile is what I identify in "The Man of the Crowd" wherein the narrator ventriloquizes the crowd's fear of a dangerous and unrecognizable person.

"The Man of the Crowd" opens with the narrator seated in the D—Coffee-House in London, observing passersby in the busy street outside. In this bustling city thoroughfare, night descends, and the narrator observes the "masses [and thinks] of them in their aggregate relations" (M 2:505). He creates a taxonomized list of the crowd based on their social and class features. These observations are skewed products of the narrator's misanthropic, paranoid vision. In this "sea of human heads" (2:507), the narrator identifies a peculiar old man who "arrest[s] and absorb[s] his whole attention, on account of the absolute idfosyncrasy [*sic*] of its expression" (2:511). What follows is the narrator's ambiguous observations of this flâneur whom he trails on a twenty-four-hour perambulation of London's streets. The story concludes when the narrator determines that the flâneur "is the type and genius of deep crime" (2:515), yet he fails to provide either a definition of, or corroborating evidence for, deep crime. Likewise, the flâneur's identity also remains a mystery.

"The Man of the Crowd" can be read as a series of clues to solve, including other mysteries, the old man's identity and the narrator's reason for following him. Queer readings of the story, such as those by Gustavus Stadler, Leland Person, and others, suggest that the narrator's pursuit involves a pattern of homoerotic stalking.[2] Other critics, such as Jonathan Elmer and Patrick Quinn, treat the story through the private psychology of the narrator. They identify the old man as a double of the story's narrator. Elmer discovers this in "the narrator's magnetic attraction to the man, his compulsive shadowing of him." The old

man urgently circumnavigates "through the city crowds that he does not really see, and that do not see him," subsequently drawing the narrator into the crowd with him, so they move similarly and simultaneously through the circulation of the swarm.[3] Quinn locates this doubling in the story's conclusion, when the narrator directly confronts the old man, but does not find his eye contact reciprocated. He states that the "narrator encountered and failed to recognize a prophetic image of his future self," which is, therefore, the meaning of the story, but not a meaning of which the narrator is aware. Ultimately, Quinn positions the tale's narrator as Poe's self-caricature.[4]

This doubling is precisely what Byer pinpoints as the central concern of "The Man of the Crowd." He notes that portrayals of urban areas in nineteenth-century literature presented challenges to these authors who confronted "social and cultural disorder." As such, "the metropolis and its crowds confronted the writer's imagination with an uncanny, mysterious double."[5] In Poe's short story, Byer finds that each person in the crowd is an "analogue for the others. The doubling underlined by Elmer and Quinn is therefore not exclusive to the narrator and old man, but spreads throughout the crowd by way of contagion."[6] Byer exponentiates this doubling and argues that the flâneur should be understood "to be a personification of the crowd itself."[7]

These theories focus on the narrator's interiority and crowd observations. I would, instead, like to offer an alternative contribution to the range of scholarship on Poe's short story, one that adds to Byer's emphasis on the crowd and is informed by affect theory and urban studies of crowds. Such a reading moves beyond the private psychology of the narrator and old man and positions the crowd as the story's protagonist. Recent scholarship on the behavior of the nineteenth-century crowd, urban (night)walking, and the science of insanity opens a new understanding of "The Man of the Crowd." This exploration traverses a period in London defined by its surge of mass immigration and urbanization, and its people contagious with fear. The narrator's obsession with the "essence of crime" and "deep crime" reflects the anxiety and suspicion of social anonymity afflicting nineteenth-century urban populations. Keenly aware of the new dangers present in urban life, Poe encourages readers to see how the city created social structures of paranoia that have as much to do with the perceiver as they do with actually deranged persons. Readers may not conclude "The Man of the Crowd" understanding the exact nature of the old man's crime, but the first to read Poe's story in 1840 likely identified with the narrator's suspicions of the flâneur, that he is, with or without reason, a suspiciously dangerous individual. This impression is not lost on contemporary readers.

In the following discussion, I do not attempt a literary diagnosis of the narrator or the man of the crowd, nor do I look to argue the contemporary clinical conception of psychopathy. Instead, my aim is to explore the crowd conditions of "The Man of the Crowd" that determine its psychopathic structure. By psychopathic structure, I am referring to social anonymity in modern city life as it creates a breeding ground of threat, crime, fear, unfeeling interaction, lack of familiarity, disconnection, voyeurism, and uncertainty. London's legal codification at the time helped frame this social structure, which cultivated a key feature of the crowd: the fear of vagrants inhabiting popular spaces. In *Edgar Allan Poe Revisited*, Scott Peeples similarly addresses the story's social and crowd conditions. He writes that "The Man of the Crowd" anticipates Poe's Dupin detective stories and their themes of immorality, crime, and modern city life, and their characteristic pursuer and pursued relationship. In looking at "The Man of the Crowd," Peeples gestures at a reason for the crowd's manic behavior: "The old man embodies contradiction but ultimately represents qualities of the metropolis that frightened the genteel middle class of the nineteenth century just as they frighten so many people today: anonymity, rootlessness, vice, poverty, lack of personal space, and most of all, the threat of violence."[8] This set of social conditions for the nineteenth-century urban crowd overdetermine fear and the anxiety of threat as popularly exchanged affective transmissions. For this reason, the narrator's conclusion that the old man is guilty of deep crime should not be understood as a legal allegation, but instead a symptom resulting from the narrator's fear and paranoia, a psychological condition ubiquitous throughout the crowd.

In this article, I first trace the history of psychopathy beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, before psychopathy was introduced into psychiatric discourse, to its current understanding today. This lineage charts psychological characteristics resembling psychopathy as they were understood in Poe's time to psychopathy's continued relevance in modern times. This leads into my second section: the politics and social conditions of nineteenth-century urban crowds, specifically London. The threat of vagrancy and crime associated with newly immigrated people reveals the widespread fear of dangerous individuals in these densely populated urban centers. Finally, I use affect studies to connect the discourses of the crowd and psychopathy to Poe's "The Man of the Crowd," underscoring the tone of fear, threat, and paranoia therein. This analysis asserts that the narrator's suspicion of "deep crime," and his concern that "the essence of all crime is undivulged" (M 2:507), is a projection of his paranoia onto the flâneur as a condition of the crowd. "The Man of the Crowd" reveals the affective structure of the crowd in which individuals are contagious with a fear that every man is a man of the crowd—that is, a person guilty of deep crime.

The Science of Psychopathy and the Mask of Social Threat

Psychology has exponentially evolved in the 176 years since the initial publication of "The Man of the Crowd," and yet the psychopath in our world remains nearly as elusive as in Poe's. The story's first printing runs concomitant to an emerging discourse on abnormal psychology that links to the inscrutability of the psychopath in contemporary popular imagination. I identify this psychological phenomenon with the kind of problem that typically interests Poe. Vicki Hester and Emily Seger, in their analysis of Poe's short story "The Black Cat," conclude that the narrator's psychological symptoms determine his actions and words as consistent with current forensic research on psychopathy.[9] Though Poe authored "The Man of the Crowd" almost a half century before "psychopathy" entered scientific parlance, the term is not without precedent, and it did not appear in medical terminology ex nihilo. As mentioned above, psychopathy is a direct descendant of nineteenth-century theories on "moral insanity," a phrase designated for those dangerous, violent individuals, lurking in public spaces, who appear safe and morally sound.

To understand moral insanity, thinkers first used the term "dangerous individual" and, later, "monster."[10] The monster, in this sense, is the person guilty of some heinous moral crime and who violently attacks others without remorse. Perverting the laws of nature, the monster—or dangerous individual—invokes fear and panic by threatening social stability. After several unsuccessful attempts, psychologists and doctors were unable to locate a biological causal origin for "moral insanity" and its violent, deviant effects. They decided to jettison the term as a valid scientific concept by the end of the nineteenth century.[11] Despite its uncertain future, the concept developed further, evolving from the monster and dangerous individual and entering the scientific lexicon as the "psychopath." Throughout its precarious evolution, the core idea remained intact, so modern usage of the term psychopath refers to the same pernicious individual whom Poe's contemporaries feared. To this character, nothing is sacred besides his own person and interests.

American psychiatrist Hervey Cleckley investigated psychopathy in a series of case studies. Psychopathy, by Cleckley' s time, was already emerging in popular discourse as a psychological phenomenon synonymous with evil.[12] No longer looking for a biological causal understanding of psychopathy, the psychiatric profession expanded the list of behaviors associated with their psychological fugitive to describe the phenomenon rather than discover its origin. Cleckley's research evolved the investigation of psychopathy into a more rigorous and recursive endeavor when he published *The Mask of Sanity* in 1941. In his

landmark text, he uses the mask metaphorically to explain the psychopath's fraudulent and deceitful behaviors and motivations, disguises used to appear normal to his peers. Cleckley explains that it is "the tendency of psychopaths to present initially as confident, personable, and well adjusted in comparison with most psychiatric patients [who] reveal severe underlying pathology through their actions and attitudes over time."[13]

To complicate matters, the psychopath cannot be known as such until he displays these concealed behaviors because he hides behind a veil of self-assurance, glibness, superficial charm, and cockiness.[14] The psychopath is capable of acting normal despite his "abnormal" motivation, and he does so as a conscious act to appear psychologically and affectively similar to others. The mask, therefore, serves as the ideal metaphor for the psychopath in representing his lack of conscience. The mask presents an empathetic, caring person while hiding the distortion of those qualities behind it. This suggests not only the psychopath's immoral, dangerous intent, but his threatening, unpredictable capacity to provoke panic in others.

In "The Man of the Crowd," the narrator exhibits a pessimistic and misanthropic psychology. One may be seduced into believing he is isolated by these fantasies. The story's compelling narrative, however, is sustained by the narrator's insanity, which is difficult to confirm as actual insanity. What if, the narrator urges us to question, the old man actually is unnervingly dangerous? Joseph Moldenhauer, in looking at the psychology and moral vision in Poe's work, suggests that "Poe refuses to provide an external vantage point from which the reader can scrutinize the action of the tale and the motivations of its hero. No appeal by the author to the community of ordinary men, with ordinary values, relieves the intense and solipsistic privacy of these works; we have no means of bridging our commonplace world and the strange realm of his art."[15] Moldenhauer finds the values and psychology of the protagonist "induced in ourselves"[16] as readers. As I interpret the story, the psychology of the tale's protagonist is not self-contained in this character, but is affectively transmitted, bidirectionally, between him and those whom he encounters. For instance, the narrator's concluding remark on the flâneur, that "it does not permit itself to be read" (M 2:515), suggests his inability to understand the old man's identity. This indecipherability is often understood as isolated to the narrator and flâneur, but I want to suggest that this unreadability should amplify throughout the crowd: both the fictional crowd of Poe's story and the crowds Poe's contemporaries walked among in the mid-nineteenth century. Psychopathy, as I see it here, acts as a contagion within the crowd, permeating the barriers between individuals. Those familiar with nineteenth-century sociologist Gustave Le

Bon's crowd theory will recall his belief that crowds operate by a similar form of irresistible contagion, whereby each individual in the crowd unwillingly sacrifices his agency for the collective good. In effect, individuals involuntarily absorb the opinions and feelings of one another.[17] In this view, the narrator would hardly be alone in his paranoia and fear. Moldenhauer writes that such a psychological vulnerability "is what makes Poe's tales so permanently and authentically horrific, as the line between spectator and perverse actor imaginatively dissolves."[18]

My application of psychopathy to "The Man of the Crowd" understands that Poe mediates this fear of criminal intent—the threat of unknowable, dangerous individuals—as pervasive and omnipresent in the story's urban setting. We can think of the monster and dangerous individual in nineteenth-century thought as prototypes to Cleckley's psychopath, whose symptomatic criteria are evident in the narrator and the old man. My reading of the story, however, extends beyond these two characters. To elaborate on Peeples's reasons for the crowd's frenzied behavior, it is then necessary to delve into the social conditions of the nineteenth-century.

Urbanization and the Paranoid Politics of the Nineteenth-Century Crowd

The crowd dynamic structuring "The Man of the Crowd" returns us to those qualities, highlighted by Peeples, that frightened the nineteenth-century middle class: anonymity, vice, poverty, and the threat of violence as they created a popular paranoia in the period. Between 1820 and 1850, the promulgation of progressive democracy and equal opportunity happened simultaneously with the industrial and transportation revolution in the United States, the most intense period of urbanization in American history, and thus a new experience of crowding in urban centers and trafficking of peoples via travel. As one might expect, there were problems with this transformation. A few decades before, Thomas Jefferson warned that large cities would become "great sores" on the body politic.[19] Many felt this was coming true. In this thirty-year span, the population in urban American environments inflated by roughly 500 percent, resulting ultimately in high unemployment and widespread poverty. This drastic population increase, occurring in greater numbers in the United States than anywhere else in the world, included an influx of migrants to urban areas from within the United States and Europe. This rapidly expanding time also witnessed the rise of mobs that included gang members acting violently toward one another, African Americans, and working-class women. Prostitution—not yet illegal—grew into a popular trade for many women. But not all was ill. Transportation technology

allowed for increased trade and modes of communication on a global scale. Urban wages paid higher than did farm labor wages. Entertainment venues emerged. And above all, the freedom of new possibilities—economic and personal—not seen in rural areas was attractive to those in the United States and abroad.[20] Nineteenth-century writers like Charles Dickens, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, William Blake, and of course Poe imagined the idea of a people amid an age of population expansion and its fluctuating conditions. Crowds became one privileged way for these writers to portray their hopes and ruminations, and fears and apprehensions, of these new people.

Poe witnessed this mass urbanization within both the United States and England, having lived in both countries in his youth. The year he published his short story coincided with a population boom that put the United States on par with Great Britain—both nations expanded to seventeen million residents.[21] London, the location of "The Man of the Crowd," witnessed a similar mass urbanization, including people moving from the countryside into London's urban areas. This mass migration of individuals from the countryside into the city had been occurring for several decades by the mid-nineteenth century. Before this period, people were accustomed to easily identifying others, which allowed them to determine whether a person was safe or threatening. But these new people were largely incomprehensible—socially, economically, politically, and otherwise—to London's already established population. These "immigrants" had abandoned family ties, names, associations, and traditions. Considering their mass migration into the city within such a short period, determining a person's identity became gradually more difficult. Newly arrived persons were often shrouded in a cloak of mystery as their association, social rank, and familial lineage and connection were indeterminate. These conditions determined the inclusion or exclusion of others, and a person unidentifiable was typically a person excluded. This first wave of mass immigration in the West predetermines the structural crisis of fear in both history and literature.

Tensions between individuals of the crowd thus became increasingly exacerbated. Matthew Beaumont's book *Nightwalking* describes London's streets in the daytime, which "simmered with an inchoate and sometimes incomprehensible semiotics"; at night, however, "the potential for misunderstandings and social conflict were exacerbated."[22] There is ample reason for this diverse population's incomprehensible semiotics. Richard Sennett, in *The Fall of Public Man*, describes the emergence of two types of people in the nineteenth-century urban crowd, one of whom desires public appearance, and the other, private enclosure. Together, they designate two archetypal figures common in London during this time. What Sennett terms the "psychic distress" in society, he says,

stems from a belief that people hold a necessary secrecy in their regular social activity. He describes this psychic distress as

> the desire to withdraw from feeling in order not to show one's feelings involuntarily to others. Only by making your feelings a secret are they safe, only at hidden moments and places are you free to interact. But precisely this fearful withdrawal from expression puts more pressure on others to get closer to you to know what you feel, what you want, what you know. Flight and the seed of compulsive intimacy are absolutely joined: the sheer expression of an emotion, any emotion, becomes ever more important as so much work becomes necessary to penetrate another's defenses to the point where he is willing to interact.[23]

Sennett describes two identities that emerged in the city during this period: the spectator and the publicly expressive individual. At first glance, Sennett's description of each character resembles the dynamic shared between Poe's narrator and the old man he follows. Spectators chose their roles as people who do not perform, but instead watch others. In staving off the public's observation of themselves, spectators could withhold expression of their own inner feelings. While they were often unsure of their own feelings, according to Sennett, spectators were convinced that these hidden thoughts could nonetheless express themselves regardless of their will. In the process of public observation, the spectator could discover a sense of personal fulfillment and social arousal in the cosmopolitan crowd while still maintaining an element of privacy. This public crowd experience was therefore an important one for the spectator. Opposite to the passive spectator was the publicly expressive individual. This expressive character type was unconcerned with prohibiting their inner feelings from public observation. Spectators thrived on watching the confident and "skilled performer," who was fluent in nineteenth-century social mores, indifferent to maintaining the privacy of his own feelings, and socially unrestrained within the crowd. The passive spectator observed the publicly expressive person, as Sennett notes, because they "need to see in the public actor certain traits of personality, whether he possesses them or not; they invest in him in fantasy what he may lack in reality."[24] As the flâneur yearned to be seen and illuminated in London's nineteenth-century gaslit streets, his foil preferred to linger in the shadows, observant of his passersby and projecting onto them an imagined, fantasized reality.

These two character types of the nineteenth-century crowd—the spectator and the flâneur—might seem apropos to categorize the narrator and

the old man. After all, the protagonist furtively follows the old man who meanders oblivious to his stalker. In my view, however, we should be wary in painting the two into Sennett's picture. My suspicion lies in understanding Poe's flâneur as a character whose status as the archetypal publicly expressive individual is complicated by his suspected "insanity," which is not a part of Sennett's depiction of this persona (not to mention that Sennett's dichotomy of characters becomes difficult to conceptualize when considering the protagonist and old man's doubling).

Walter Benjamin also contests the flâneur's status as such in his innovative book on Charles Baudelaire, *The Writer of Modern Life*. Benjamin identifies the flâneur as a new type of person in the nineteenth century who "strolled the streets of [cities like] Paris with an empathetic openness."[25] Regarding "The Man of the Crowd," he notes that "to Poe, the flâneur was, above all, someone who does not feel comfortable in his own company. Poe purposely blurs the difference between the asocial person and the flâneur. The harder a man is to find, the more suspicious he becomes."[26] For Benjamin, something surreptitious surrounds this mysterious crowd walker: "The man of the crowd," he writes, "is no flâneur. In him, composure has given way to manic behavior."[27] It is hard to disagree with Benjamin on this point. The old man—however we approach him—is suspiciously manic. If he is a flâneur, then he is a flâneur sui generis. And so, the relationship between the narrator and flâneur in "The Man of the Crowd" does not resemble the relationship between the spectator and the publicly expressive individual that Sennett lays out. Indeed, something manic overwhelms the flâneur so that he appears infected by the contagion transmitted throughout this nineteenth-century crowd, thus leaving him hardly alone in his mania.[28]

With the increased anxiety of newcomers overtaking London's streets, Matthew Beaumont tell us that "the relentless traffic of people in the metropolis, among them recent immigrants from the countryside, created the potential for social confusion." Social rank and class had been easily discernable to members of communities used to identifying one another by gait, attire, and other social behaviors. These signifiers served to define social hierarchies and make them comprehensible. But these new people wore different clothes and displayed different behaviors. As a result, crowds composed of new, different individuals grew in social ambiguity, so "all that had seemed socially solid was in a state of ceaseless dissolution."[29] This was already troubling in the daytime, with the sun beaming on London's streets and illuminating the populace, but upon sunset, alleged criminals mixed with the crowd.[30] For those walking among the motley London throng, social illegibility became increasing cause and concern for

paranoia and fear of others. Poe takes readers through this type of dangerous cityscape in his story. The various communities, areas, and poor milieus of the city through which the narrator travels point toward several class implications of abjection and destitution.

Beaumont further describes the paranoid feelings present in the nineteenth-century crowd in response to the potential for latent, urban danger. Nighttime amplified suspicions in an atmosphere overdetermined by paranoia and suspicion of strangers. A person unidentifiable to authorities became legally criminal and in violation of a law which tautologically justified itself to the London population, further validating peoples' fear of outsiders. If it is law, such thinking goes, the law must have precedence. As popular opinion therefore assumed, nightwalkers were not out for a leisurely post-dinner stroll—they were wandering the night in search of food, money, and shelter through criminal measures. Beaumont notes that even after the introduction of street lighting, London was poorly policed at night.[31] Fears of night-prowling criminals, from prostitutes to thieves, engendered paranoia, casting shadows of reservation on men and women alike. In this light, nightwalkers "retain a certain ambiguity as a legal entity" because of England's Vagrancy Act of 1824 prohibiting vagrancy and threatening jail time of at least one month of hard labor.[32] The Act of 1822, on which the Act of 1824 was built, was written with enough ambiguous legal space to apprehend men and women simply for being out at night, and without the necessary allegation or evidence to justify an arrest. Laws lacking definitive, specific rules for enforcement created a paradox where those who could not be captured under then-existing legal code could be captured for their absence of legal identification. Such a law is paradoxical in that it allows legal authorities to recognize a legally unidentifiable subject as legally identifiable while maintaining the subject's legal status as unidentifiable. The indiscriminate nature of the Vagrancy Act of 1824 was polemical but to the authorities, it was advantageous because "anybody deemed to be leading an itinerant existence could be prosecuted under its terms."[33] Equivocally written and enforced laws encourage unjust criminal prosecution by permitting legal institutions to capture, interrogate, and punish those deemed unclassifiable.

The emphasis Londoners placed on communal identity and establishment should, I hope, be clear. At a time when identifying others became increasingly more difficult, it also became subsequently more important. The easiest method to forge a communal identity, Sennett writes, arises when a group's survival feels threatened. The group is then urged into collective action to meet this threat and therefore "feel close to one another and search for images that bind them together."[34] The narrator's cataloging of individuals, pessimistic

and cantankerous though it may be, is at its simplest a listing of identifiable peoples—that is, a listing of peoples he is not compelled to follow. Whether the narrator accurately portrays them or not, or has a personal liking of them or not, is irrelevant. What is important for the narrative is that the narrator can identify them, and he cannot identify the old man. The acknowledgment of his inability to identify the old man marks when the narrative discovers its plot. Once the story illustrates a disconnect in an individual's social and psychological identification with others, social cohesiveness becomes vulnerable and threatened. Sennett clarifies: "The community idea involved here is the belief that when people disclose themselves to each other, a tissue grows to bind them together. If there is no psychological openness, there can be no social bond."[35] Social anonymity and the lack of psychological connection between individuals dissolves the social bond on which communities have historically relied.

Strangers in these communities would typically encounter one another on the street or in a pub, public park, or coffeehouse. Of these locations, it is the coffeehouse that holds a privileged position. Sennett emphasizes the important role of coffeehouses in nineteenth-century London, explaining that these popular establishments served as romanticized institutions. Cafés were "prime information centers" and the common location for citizens to meet, engage, and socialize. In the coffeehouse, Sennett adds, "distinctions of rank were temporarily suspended; anyone sitting in the coffeehouse had a right to talk to anyone else, to enter into any conversation, whether he knew the other people or not, whether he was bidden to speak or not."[36] The mutual process between observing and being observed took on an importance never before witnessed in London, and this tacit, symbiotic examination centered on watching how people walk.[37] The coffeehouse is therefore an ideal and socially diverse location for Poe's narrator to encounter a variety of persons as they patronize the establishment and display themselves for reading.

As mentioned above, "he Man of the Crowd" opens at the D—Coffee-House in London" (M 2:507). Sitting and watching from the café, the narrator is affectively energized by the urban cityscape around him. He feels cheerful—"the opposite of ennui"—after recovering his strength from months of illness. He admits that he "derive[s] positive pleasure even from many of the legitimate sources of pain" (2:507). He details the fast-moving London crowd. His crowd description composes roughly one-third of the short story. This laborious analysis of people should convince readers of the narrator's obsession with understanding his social surroundings. The flow of vagrants excites his suspicions. This catalog of taxonomically described people mostly features the abject. They are low-class in occupation and appearance, sexually perverse, and destitute.

He thinks "of them in their aggregate relations" (2:507). The people are listed hierarchically, commencing with the aristocratic crowd and those containing a "satisfied business-like demeanor." These people "did not greatly excite [his] attention" (2:508). Next, he sees men wearing fashionably outdated clothing, hand-me-downs from the gentry, but these individuals also fail to catalyze the narrator's suspicions. He moves on, noting men of various classes and assumed occupations, until he "[descends] in the scale of what is termed gentility" and finds "darker and deeper themes for speculation" (2:509). Finally, the narrator arrives at the group most deserving of his attention, an assembly who will lead to his man of the crowd (2:510). The group comprises beggars, mendicants, and the ethnically untrustworthy. The narrator details and obsesses over them the most because he associates their poverty with an equal depravity in character. Despite the narrator's confidence in reading his passersby, Peeples points out that "the crowd also defies the narrator's efforts to classify it, for no stable hierarchy emerges and it remains unknowable. The man never leaves the crowd because he *is* the crowd of which the narrator, too, has now become a part."[38]

As the night darkens, so does the narrator's interest in the crowd intensify; and as the gas lamps burn brighter, the narrator says, "The wild effects of the light enchained me to an examination of individual faces" (M 2:511). He sees the old man for the first time: "I was thus occupied in scrutinizing the mob, when suddenly there came into view a countenance (that of a decrepid [*sic*] old man, some sixty-five or seventy years of age)—a countenance which at once arrested and absorbed my whole attention, on account of the absolute idfosyncracy [*sic*] of its expression" (2:511). In a craving desire to know this flâneur, the narrator embraces the desire to follow him. He provides readers dubious reason for surveilling this man beyond the suspicion that he is decrepit, a description that hardly distinguishes him from the rest of the crowd. The narrator's dubious reasoning here should engender in readers incredulity and apprehension regarding his character and motive.

The narrator departs from the café in pursuit of the old man. He considers the flâneur as dangerous and socially undesirable as well as, paradoxically, wealthy and socially desirable. Closely examining the man, the narrator suspects that his vision "deceives" him, though he "caught a glimpse both of a diamond and of a dagger" (M 2:512). The objects which the narrator spies determine whether the flâneur is either socially acceptable or life-threatening. The diamond signifies wealth, status, and safety. The dagger signifies depravity, danger, and threat. That he has both, however, lends to the old man's ambiguity and the narrator's confusion. More important, it is further evidence of the narrator's unreliability. "If the scene appears anything other than absurd," Peeples

writes, "it would probably look as if the old man has at least as much reason to fear the disguised stranger who is following him . . . as the narrator has to fear him, despite the old man's fiendish looks and the dagger beneath his cloak."[39]

Readers should be wary of this narrator who presents himself as equally volatile and dangerous as those whom he observes. The story's title—"The Man of the Crowd"—hinges on the narrator's suspicions that isolate the old man from the surrounding people. His voyeurism and reason for singling out the old man is itself suspect, as every occupant of London's cityscape, narrator included, is a man of the crowd. He clandestinely and maniacally catalogs people. Many of the observed and cataloged are described as similarly morally depraved and destitute, and as potentially dangerous as the flâneur. Out of the vast crowd, he selects and irrationally stalks a man who is suspicious because he appears idiosyncratic. The narrator's reasons for believing this man is idiosyncratic are dubious and inconsistent. He provides no justifiable reason for following the old man beyond his paradoxical qualities. In short, there is no satisfactory reason why one man of the crowd should be followed or deemed suspicious over any other. The narrator casts as much suspicion on himself as he attempts to convince readers of the flâneur's deserving of the same.

Recall Cleckley's point that the psychopath appears confident, personable, and well-adjusted despite his deceitful, malicious intentions. Any positive visual signifier displayed by the old man that could mitigate the narrator's suspicions is immediately countered by its negation. The diamond signals to the narrator confidence and wealth, but his paranoia causes him to misinterpret the object as something threatening. The flâneur appears confident and cheerful yet simultaneously dangerous and startling. His clothing portrays contradictory impressions. They are "filthy and ragged," but also of "beautiful texture" (M 2:511–12). While walking, the old man exhibits a "strong shudder" and grows "deadly pale," yet his spirits also "flicker up" (2:513–14). He is a vacillating character exhibiting spectrum-wide affects. The old man's psychology and social status are only speculative. They appear cleverly disguised and are affectively exhausting to the narrator. When the narrator initially spots the old man in the crowd, he remarks, "As I endeavored, during the brief minute of my original survey, to form some analysis of the meaning conveyed, there arose confusedly and paradoxically within my mind, the ideas of vast mental power, of caution, of penuriousness, of avarice, of coolness, of malice, of blood-thirstiness, of triumph, of merriment, of excessive terror, of intense—of supreme despair. I felt singularly aroused, startled, fascinated. 'How wild a history,' I said to myself, 'is written within that bosom!" (2:511). Since his introduction, the flâneur appears to the narrator as confident and personable yet pernicious and life-threatening.

The narrator appears equally suspect. As previously mentioned, Elmer, Quinn, Byer, and others have pointed out that the narrator and old man double each other—a feature not uncommon in Poe's tales. Peeples elaborates on this: "If the narrator is not the more sinister figure, he is at least . . . the old man's double . . . for judging by appearances, he, too, fits his own description of 'the man of the crowd': He is 'the type and the genius of deep crime. He refuses to be alone.'"[40] As the two move through the crowded streets, the narrator observes the flâneur's frequently changing walking pattern. At one point the flâneur walks "steadily and perseveringly" (2:513). Later, he walks "more slowly and with less object than before—more hesitatingly" (2:515). He retraces his steps throughout London's streets several times. The narrator maintains pace with him for the entire twenty-four-hour journey despite the walk repeatedly altering speed and pattern. In doing so, he mimics the flâneur's behaviors and actions, blurring the line between sanity and insanity. It is also unsettling that both characters parade without rest throughout their arduous journey.

While the narrator stalks the flâneur, he observes, but does not find it ironic, that the flâneur also follows people. The narrator witnesses that "for some time," the old man "followed closely a party of some ten or twelve roisterers." After approaching them in a "narrow and gloomy lane little frequented," the flâneur's voyeurism and paranoia resembles the narrator's in the story's conclusion. The old man approaches the rowdy group, "pause[s], and, for a moment, seem[s] lost in thought" (M 2:511). The narrator is suspicious of a man who is suspicious of others, who follows those suspicious others, and who also finds himself stunned and arrested once he approaches them. The narrator is observing himself observing others—the paranoid watching the paranoid—a meta-voyeuristic act that exemplifies the doubling of the narrator and flâneur throughout the crowd.

It should be apparent the ways in which both narrator and flâneur demonstrate the frightening qualities that aroused suspicions in nineteenth-century urban crowds. The disturbing behavior visible in the narrator and old man is furthermore observable in the crowd. Byer likewise comments that "the narrator's hesitating, circular utterance itself mirrors the crowd, whose form and genius occasion a mysteriously inconclusive recognition."[41] This inconclusive recognition Byer brings to our attention is the uncertainty about identifying others in the crowded, panicked streets. As a mass of unclassifiable, manic persons, it is the crowd that ultimately refuses to confess. Poe's short story shows how the massive influx of newly arrived immigrants catalyzed a pervasive panic and paranoia in London's booming metropolis. Concomitant to this period is an emerging discourse on a specific type of insanity, one that would

later be classified as psychopathy. Provided this context, it is evident that the narrator and the man he follows, in doubling each other's eccentric, ambiguous behavior, typify this saturation of crowd panic. But this does not explain the narrator's judgment on the flâneur, that the old man is the type and genius of deep crime.

For my conclusion, I build on these previous two sections, using affect studies with two purposes in mind: the first investigates how affect moves through the crowd by way of contagion. My hope here is to explain how the fear of unintelligible, dangerous individuals, such as the psychopath, moves bidirectionally between individual and crowd. The second purpose is to decipher the meaning of the essence of crime and to understand the narrator's allegation of deep crime. The social and affective crowd conditions should then explain the psychopathic crowd structure of Poe's story.

The Affective Structure of the Nineteenth-Century Crowd

What, then, is to be made of the narrator's obsession with deep crime as it concerns the flâneur? The widespread fear of aberrant behavior in this type of individual caused great alarm among Poe's contemporaries—largely because these dangers were difficult to identify or predict. The first and last paragraphs serve as the story's most telling clues that frame it as a narrative investigation into unpardonable crime. "The Man of the Crowd" ends when the narrator confronts the old man after their twenty-four-hour perambulation. He attempts to meet the flâneur eye to eye, but the old man does not reciprocate the narrator's gaze. The narrator remarks, "He noticed me not," then epiphanically realizes that "this old man . . . is the type and the genius of deep crime. He refuses to be alone. *He is the man in the crowd*. It will be in vain to follow; for I shall learn no more of him, nor of his deeds" (M 2:515). The crowd conditions contemporaneous to the initial publication of the story explain the apprehension and paranoia prevalent in London's population, but alone, they do not fully explain the narrator's allegation that the flâneur is guilty of "deep crime." This suspicion, I argue, results from the affective social conditions of the nineteenth-century crowd and a generalized fear of the other and their threat of crime.

Psychopathy, in the context of "The Man of the Crowd," is not a deep affliction of the individual's psychology, but an affective social structure of modern relations. An affect—for instance, fear—occurs in a charged environment, in a dynamic between and across persons. Affect therefore makes opaque that area that separates self and other. It merges the two until there is no distinct binary. This means that there is no certain differentiation between the

"individual" or "individuals" and the "environment,"[42] as they are involuntarily connected. These affective connections are both bodily and psychological. In *The Transmission of Affect*, Teresa Brennan explains that affects exchanged between individuals are "social in origin but biological and physical in effect."[43] In this sense, it is helpful to think of affect in the form of an economy where the exchange of immaterial, affective responses is constantly occurring and where affects of feeling are the personal tied to the social.

Given the high number of people concentrated in one space, crowds are a privileged instance of this economy of affect, where this phenomenon occurs involuntarily between individuals. That "our emotions are not altogether our own"[44] suggests that others have an involuntary impact on the way selves think and behave. Fear qua affect, therefore, acts as a contagion infecting individuals in the crowd. In writing that "the emotions of two are not the same as emotions of one plus one,"[45] Brennan emphasizes that when individuals come together to form crowds, the affective responses subsequently generated are exponential in quantity. When an affect such as fear becomes the overwhelming, overdetermined affect within a crowd, as I see it in Poe's story, it appears as mass panic and hysteria, an irrational contagion shared between individuals. Each individual in this panicked crowd is paranoid and untrusting; every person is perceived as a threat to the others. Such, perhaps, is why Brennan notes, "In one respect the nineteenth-century studies of the group mind do make a bid for scientific status: they designate the group as pathological precisely because it is affectively imbued, and because the distinctiveness of individuals is swamped by the affects of the group."[46] Herein lies Poe's connection of nineteenth-century thought on crowds and the affective assemblage of social desirability, exclusivity, and fear.

Brian Massumi examines the relationship between affect and fear. He states that "a threat is only a threat if it retains an indeterminacy. If it has a form, it is not a substantial form, but a time form, specifically, a futurity. The threat as such is nothing yet—just a looming. It is a form of futurity yet has the capacity to fill the present without presenting itself."[47] Fear presents itself as something that need not be tangible, only imaginatively possible. The narrator cannot determine the flâneur's deep crime because no legal crime has been committed at all. This is what makes the psychopath dangerous and elusive: he is difficult to define and understand; there are no laws prohibiting psychopathy as such, so the psychopath is free to roam the streets. England's Vagrancy Act of 1822, which allowed for the capture and detainment of individuals who had not specifically violated any law, could not have captured every suspicious person, but it would have provided impetus for people to be suspicious of unidentifiable others. It would engrain in them the imaginative fear of others.

These conditions, motivated by an anonymous, looming, and intangible threat, are psychologically validated when the law is inscribed and enforced.

The narrator's obsession with the flâneur's deep crime is the self-generated fear that has no rational cause, though it manifests itself as real nonetheless. Such is the tautological justification the narrator exhibits in following the man and determining his guilt. The crime feared by the narrator is only the fear of crime, but it is a fear sufficient to determine that a crime has indeed taken place. It is, as Massumi puts it, "the unfolding reality of *that fearful feeling* [which] has become the *feeling of that fear* enfolded in perception."[48] The narrator internalizes his fear experience, transforming it into something legitimately real. It becomes "quantifiable" because "it is where the nonphenomenal in-which of experience turns phenomenal, passing into the content of experience, its immanence translated into interiority."[49] The equivocal suspicion identified in the flâneur qua nonphenomenal experience self-generates in the narrator's imagination, becoming increasingly more terrifying the longer he pursues the old man without understanding him. Contagious fear coupled with vulnerable citizenry helps compose the social conditions of nineteenth-century urban crowds and the setting of "The Man of the Crowd."

Why, then, does the narrator insist on using the modifier "deep" to distinguish the flâneur's crime from other possible accusations? Immediately before he first identifies the flâneur, the narrator lists a series of people who are ostensibly as suspicious as the old man. But despite their similar association with criminal activity and deviancy, the narrator does not follow them. For instance, he is distrustful and apprehensive of "Jew pedlars [*sic*]," "sturdy professional street beggars," and "drunkards innumerable and indescribable" (M 2:509–10). If the narrator were intrigued by the appearance of crime and mendacity alone, these individuals would be eligible for the narrator's investigation. There are also others, such as the men "whose countenances were fearfully pale, whose eyes hideously wild and red, and who clutched with quivering fingers, as they strode through the crowd, at every object which came within their reach" (2:510). They have sinned, of that the narrator is sure, but they are identifiable subjects and their crimes are ordinary. Furthermore, the narrator travels through "the most noisome quarter London, where every thing wore the worst impress of the most deplorable poverty, and of the most desperate crime" (2:514). And yet, like the noblemen, merchants, and attorneys, even this section of London and its depraved people do not excite the narrator's attention as much as the old man's ambiguity. Ordinary crime—albeit suspicious—is not surreptitious enough to propel the narrator into investigation.

The narrator alleges the flâneur's guilt of a deep crime because it is not an ordinary crime. The ordinary crime is common, familiar, and typical. Criminals guilty of ordinary crime are easily apprehended. Ordinary crime fits into a framework of legality, psychology, and human understanding. Deep crime lacks these elements. It is legally and psychologically unfamiliar. The criminal of deep crime evokes the imaginative fear turned real—the imaginative fear of the dangerous individual, unknowable in the crowd, and all the more dangerous for it. Deep crime encompasses clandestine acts that have not been committed. This fear says more about the observer than the observed.

If readers conclude the story wondering what the essence of crime and deep crime are exactly, it is because the narrator does not know himself. He provides a first clue to this in the introduction and alludes to the frightening sense of unknowable, unpardonable crime. The tale begins:

> It was well said of a certain German book that "*er lasst sick nicht lesen*"[50]—it does not permit itself to be read. There are some secrets which do not permit themselves to be told. Men die nightly in their beds, wringing the hands of ghostly confessors, and looking them piteously in the eyes—die with despair of heart and convulsion of throat, on account of the hideousness of mysteries which will not suffer themselves to be revealed. Now and then, alas, the conscience of man takes up a burthen so heavy in horror that it can be thrown down only into the grave. And thus the essence of all crime is undivulged. (M 2:506–7)

Concisely interpreted, the narrator dies nightly begging the flâneur for a confession which does not exist and therefore cannot be revealed. To suggest that "it" does not permit itself to be read is not intended by the narrator to refer solely to a German book, but rather to exceed in application to the object of his investigation. The "it," which cannot be read, is the assumed secret of another person. The secret is an irreconcilably negotiated admission of guilt between dying men and ghostly confessors. The narrator refers to himself in the third person by pluralistically identifying himself as "men dying nightly." This suggests that others share in this experience with him. As "men dying nightly," the narrator positions himself opposite to the flâneur, whom he designates as the "ghostly confessor," the one who holds the coveted secret. The narrator dies nightly by ending his journey having unsuccessfully sought a confession from the old man. The ghostly flâneur does not acknowledge the request to reveal a secret. This is because the flâneur has no secret or crime to confess to at all. The narrator believes the flâneur is guilty of deep crime but lacks the evidence to convince

readers that any crime has been committed. It is not the flâneur who refuses or is unable to confess, but the narrator who is unable to apprehend a confession from the old man. Some secrets, the narrator urges, do not permit themselves to be told. The narrator does not claim that any person is withholding a secret; he claims that the secret will not allow itself to be revealed. Secrets—what the narrator believes are unconfessed admissions of deep crime—are not prompted to admission by the allegedly guilty (i.e., the flâneur), but are assumed and sought after by dying men (i.e., the narrator). To clarify the narrator's distinction, these men on their deathbeds do not have confessions to make; rather, it is the men on their deathbeds who seek confessions from ghostly confessors. Dying men imagine these confessions are dormant and in need of waking in the ghostly confessors. But when these mysteries remain undisclosed, when they "will not suffer themselves to be revealed," they become hideous. They are hideous when men die, end their journeys, and fail to receive the confession begged for from another. When the narrator confronts the old man but goes unnoticed, he believes a deep crime is concealed merely because he looked the man piteously in the eyes and discovered that no secret would reveal itself.

Social conditions structured by anonymity, rootlessness, vice, poverty, lack of personal space, and, most of all, the threat of violence, satisfy the requirements conducive to speculating about deep crime. The essence of crime is the appearance of suspicion, danger, and threat among the paranoid crowd. If the psychopath is a malevolent figure disguised as a confident, personable, and well-adjusted individual, then he cannot be known by appearance alone. These conditions allow for the narrator to conflate uncertainty with certainty, to believe he saw either a diamond or a dagger, a confident gentleman or a psychopathic monster. In the narrator's fear and paranoia of others he assumes that the essence of crime is undivulged because the flâneur does not acknowledge his eye contact. The narrator fails to realize that he projects his crowd-induced paranoia onto the old man. The threat of this threat does not exist merely between the narrator and the flâneur, but is hyperbolized through the crowd and spread by affective contagion. The essence of crime and deep crime result from the psychopathic crowd structure amid nineteenth-century London's rapidly fluctuating urban conditions. The narrator assumes the flâneur is guilty of deep crime. Historically, readers have believed him.

Fear—specifically, the threat of terror and a ubiquitous paranoia—is a structure of the crowd in Poe's short story. The probability of danger does not matter; threat requires little or no potential; and fear does not require scientific validation when it self-manifests regardless of any actual, external cause. The narrator of "The Man of the Crowd" illustrates exactly this. This experience

is not exclusive to him because it represents the way fear generated itself throughout the nineteenth-century crowd. If a person in the crowd cannot be read, if their affective displays misalign with our own, that alone is sufficient to produce the anxiety of threat. The threat of the psychopath is alone sufficient to excite fear in the individual, justified perhaps, only by the tenuousness of conjecture. Cleckley concludes *The Mask of Sanity* by asking, "If we cannot agree that the psychopath has anything like a 'psychosis' or even a 'mental disorder,' can we not all agree that some means is urgently needed of dealing more realistically with whatever it is that maybe the matter with him?"[51] While Cleckley appears hopeful in clinically addressing and ailing the psychopath, Poe possesses a pessimistic outlook for recognizing him and immunizing the crowd against him. But one thing remains constant from Poe, through Cleckley, and up through the present day: no matter what terminology we use to describe the person who evokes in us a profound paranoia—monster, dangerous person, or psychopath—his fearful presence in the anonymous crowd remains suspended in unknowability. The narrator concludes on the flâneur "er lasst sich nicht lessen"—it does not permit itself to be read; but perhaps more fitting, psychopathy does not permit itself to be read. And despite this illegibility, there exists some determination to find him and urge him into confession.

PHILIP GRECH is a doctoral candidate specializing in American literature and culture before 1900. His research interests include politics, revolutions, insurgencies, philosophy, social sciences, affect theory, and crowd theory. He has presented papers at the Northeast Modern Language Association and others. He teaches composition and American literature courses.

Notes

1. Nineteenth-century literature does not discuss psychopathy because it entered parlance near the century's last decade with few references immediately thereafter. The *Oxford English Dictionary* finds the earliest usage of the term in 1885. Only one usage predates this, written one year prior, and it is used synonymously with "psychotherapist". This 1885 term introduces into the lexicon a new psychological phenomenon: the psychopath is "a type which has only recently come under the notice of medical science . . . Beside his own person and his own interests, nothing is sacred to the psychopath."

2. See Gustavus Stadler, "Poe and Queer Studies," *Poe Studies / Dark Romanticism* 33, nos. 1–2 (2000): 19–22. Stadler writes that "the story emerges from, and remains within, the socially vexed state of sexuality, where a person's 'craving' is acted upon and explored, not by running off to sea, but by naming someone else as criminal" (21). See also Leland Person, "Queer Poe: The Tell-Tale Heart of His Fiction," *Poe Studies* 41, no. 1 (2008): 7–30. Person says that "the narrator's pursuit of another man through the streets

of London, observing without being observed, epitomizes male efforts to make other men objects of the male gaze without implicating the self in a reciprocal circuit of gaze and desire" (11).

3. Jonathan Elmer, *Reading at the Social Limit: Affect, Mass Culture, and Edgar Allan Poe* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 172.

4. Patrick F. Quinn, *The French Face of Edgar Poe* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1957), 231–32.

5. Robert H. Byer, "Mysteries of the City: A Reading of Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd,'" in *Ideology and Classic American Literature*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch and Myra Jehlen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 222.

6. Byer, 236–37.

7. Byer, 238.

8. Scott Peeples, *Edgar Allan Poe Revisited* (New York: Twayne, 1998), 123–24.

9. Vicki Hester and Emily Seger, "Edgar Allan Poe: 'The Black Cat,' and Current Forensic Psychology," *Edgar Allan Poe Review* 15, no. 2 (2014): 176.

10. Cary Federman, Dave Holmes, and Jean Daniel Jacob, "Deconstructing the Psychopath: A Critical Discursive Analysis," *Cultural Critique* 72, no. 1 (2009): 57.

11. Federman, Holmes, and Jacob, 45–48.

12. Federman, Holmes, and Jacob.

13. Quoted in J. L. Skeem et al., "Psychopathic Personality: Bridging the Gap Between Scientific Evidence and Public Policy," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 12, no. 3 (2011): 99.

14. American Psychiatric Association, "Antisocial Personality Disorder," in *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-5* (Arlington, Va.: American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

15. Joseph J. Moldenhauer, "Murder as a Fine Art: Basic Connections Between Poe's Aesthetics, Psychology, and Moral Vision," *PMLA* 83 no. 2 (1968): 297.

16. Moldenhauer.

17. Gustave Le Bon. *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (1895; repr., Mineola, N.Y.: Dover, 2002). The focus of Le Bon's study is the "psychological" crowd, which operates according to "the psychological law of the mental unity of crowds." There is an immediate dismissal of responsibility that results from a person's anonymity within the crowd. These effects are transferred among individuals through contagion so that a person sacrifices their personal interest in favor of the collective crowd interest (7). Individuals can rarely resist this, suggesting Le Bon's skepticism for a person to maintain any significant agency in crowd formations: "He is no longer himself, but has become an automaton who has ceased to be guided by his will . . . a creature acting by instinct" (8). In this process of losing one's independence, the person's "ideas and feelings have undergone a transformation, and the transformation is so profound as to change the miser into a spendthrift, the sceptic into a believer, the honest man into a criminal, and the coward into a hero" (9). Stupidity accumulates in this agglomeration. Contagion in this crowd acts by way of hypnosis where every sentiment tact is contagious, the viral sentiment transmitted by a literal irresistible reciprocity between individuals. This contagion is so powerful that it forces on individuals not only certain opinions, but certain modes of feelings as well.

18. Moldenhauer, "Murder as a Fine Art," 297.

19. Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2007), 530–31.

20. Howe, 527–32.

21. Howe, 538.

22. Matthew Beaumont, *Nightwalking: A Nocturnal History of London* (New York: Verso, 2016), 130.

23. Richard Sennett, *The Fall of the Public Man* (New York: Norton, 1996), 148–49.

24. Sennett, 195–96.

25. Walter Benjamin, *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*, ed. Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 79.

26. Benjamin, 79.

27. Benjamin, 188.

28. Despite the complication in designating Poe's old man a flâneur, I continue using the term for the sake of consistency.

29. Beaumont, *Nightwalking*, 130.

30. Beaumont, 131.

31. Beaumont, 122.

32. Beaumont, 246.

33. Beaumont, 246–47.

34. Sennett, *Fall of Public Man*, 222.

35. Sennett, 222.

36. Sennett, 81.

37. Sennett, 84.

38. Peeples, *Edgar Allan Poe Revisited*, 124.

39. Peeples.

40. Peeples.

41. Byer, "Mysteries of the City," 224.

42. Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004), 6.

43. Brennan, 3.

44. Brennan, 2.

45. Brennan, 51.

46. Brennan, 18.

47. Brian Massumi, "Fear (The Spectrum Said)," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 13, no. 1 (2005): 35.

48. Massumi, 38.

49. Massumi.

50. It is worth mentioning Mabbott's note stating that Poe "took this to mean that the book was too shocking for a reader to peruse it completely; but the meaning of his source may have been that the book referred to was execrably printed, or that no copy was available" (2:518).

51. Cleckley, *Mask of Sanity*, 446.