

5-2019

Recovering Affiliates: Reclassifying Emily Dickinson's Variant Poems

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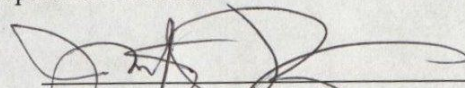
Recovering Affiliates: Reclassifying Emily Dickinson's Variant Poems

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English from
The College of William and Mary

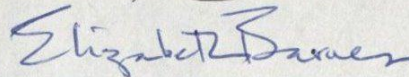
by

Anna McAnnally

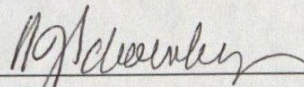
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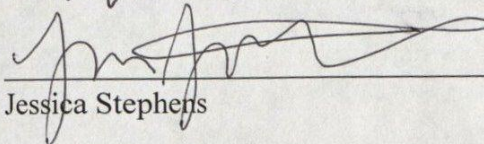
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May 1, 2019

Introduction

In 1863, Emily Dickinson composed the poem beginning “Publication – is the Auction,” (F788) and copied it into one of her many booklets of her poems. Though Dickinson had already published five of her poems by this time, the poem expresses a strong aversion to publication, saying,¹

Publication - is the Auction
Of the Mind of Man –
Poverty – be justifying
For so foul a thing (lines 1-4)

This stanza suggests that selling poetry for publication is the same as selling one’s “mind,” and that only “poverty” would “justif[y]” publishing poetry. Dickinson goes on to argue that death is better than publication, as “We – would rather” (5) “go” (6) “unto the White Creator –” (6) “Than invest– Our Snow-” (8), and that any “Price” (16) for poetry would be a “disgrace” (16). In saying that literal death is better than the “invest[ment]” of her “snow,” Dickinson shows how serious she is about resisting publication, a stance she maintained throughout her life.

Though Dickinson did publish twelve poems in her lifetime, these twelve poems reflect less than one percent of her total known body of work, no doubt because of her disparaging view of publication. The remaining 1,767 poems were unavailable to the public until her death in 1886 when her longtime friend, along with her brother’s mistress, compiled most of her poems for publication. In the years since Dickinson’s death, six major editors have compiled versions of her work, ultimately leading to the publication of the full known corpus of her poems, including a book of facsimiles of the

¹ This, and all subsequent quotations of Dickinson poems, are taken from Franklin’s Variorum edition of Dickinson’s poems.

manuscripts themselves. However, the fact remains that in Dickinson's eyes, death was a better option than seeing her poems published. How can publishers organize and distribute these poems in the way Dickinson intended when she called publication itself a "disgrace"?

One major decision modern editors have made in the publication of Dickinson's poems is referring to the poems by their first lines, since only fifteen of her poems were ever titled by Dickinson. This decision in itself, given the fact that publication requires a means of referring to poems, does not seem to betray Dickinson's intentions. However, upon further consideration, the use of the first line as an identification of the poems shows an even further departure from Dickinson's desire – defining them not as she describes them in "Publication- is the Auction," as "thought[s] belong[ing] to Him [or her] who gave [them]" (9) but rather by a classification method Dickinson herself did not produce. Indeed, as Shannon Cameron argues, this may have been the very reason Dickinson was so opposed to publication, as she perhaps believed that publication could not represent her ideas the way she intended, as publication was constricted by conventions (like titling poems) to which Dickinson did not conform (Cameron 52-3). As Dickinson says in "Publication- is the Auction," her works are like "Royal Air" (12) or "Heavenly Grace" (14), and thus unable to be properly expressed on a page for a public audience.

Unfortunately, this insight into Dickinson's aversion to publication does not help much in Dickinson scholarship, as it is impossible to reverse the publication of her poems. In the more than 130 years since Dickinson's death, her poems have taken on a life of their own that Dickinson could never have imagined. However, scholars can work

to get closer to what Dickinson intended for her poems through examining their contexts in order to understand what she meant for them to mean and how she meant for them to function in unpublished form. This means examining and questioning the very system scholars use to categorize the poems themselves, asking if the system erases Dickinson's method for identifying her own poems. Through investigating the ways in which these poems are categorized, scholars can better understand the flaws in the system and consider a way to publish Dickinson's poems that perhaps gets closer to the way she intended her poems to be understood and experienced.

With these things in mind, this thesis examines Dickinson's poems which share a first line but share none of the same context and very little of the same language. Because of the system of using the first line to organize Dickinson poems, these poems which I study have been published as versions of the same poem rather than distinct poems. However, I argue that the first line shared between the poems is not meant to indicate that the poems are the same, but rather that they are somewhat related to one another. Because of these poems' status as related but different, I will refer to them as affiliate poems to indicate both their similarity and ultimate unique identity. After all, if Dickinson had intended her poems for publication, given the major differences between these poems, she would likely have given them different titles. It is only through publication in the absence of a title that these affiliates become conflated as the same poem, resulting in the erasure of these affiliate poems from Dickinson's body of work. In this thesis, I will show that poems sharing a first line, but very little language and context are not the same poem, but rather affiliate poems.

Variants and Manuscripts

In order to understand the complexity of Dickinson's poems, it is first important to understand what kinds of variants Dickinson created. Dickinson relied heavily on variants within and between her poems to both change and expand the meaning within the poem. To do this, Dickinson used three different kinds of variation— word level variants, line level variants, and stanza level variants— each of which function slightly differently. Internal variants are words which Dickinson marked as possible replacements for the words she chose in a poem. Through the use of plus-like markings (figure 1), Dickinson indicated places where words could be substituted and, at the bottom of the page, the possible words that could replace them. However, scholars are not entirely sure how to read these variants. Though both T.H. Johnson and R.W. Franklin observe the variants in their work on Dickinson's manuscripts, neither puts forward a theory as to what these variants are doing, saying only that words are likely changed within poems as part of a process of revision. Notably, Cameron argues against this broad suggestion, saying instead that these word level variants could indicate that the word in the poem is meant to be read along with all the possible variants for that word in order to deepen and complicate the meaning of the poem (21). Cameron's work was the first to suggest that variants be read together rather than as different possibilities, changing the way scholars today read Dickinson. Though this kind of variation is not addressed directly in my argument, it complicates the notion of versions.

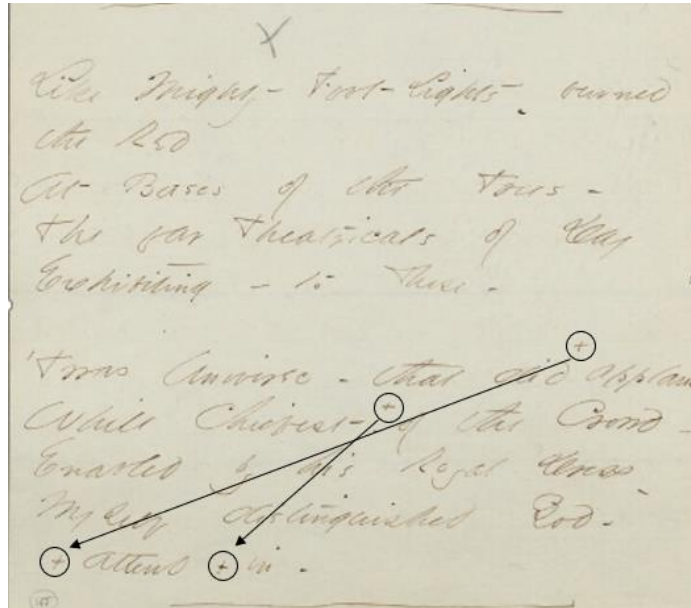


Figure 1: "Like Mighty Footlights - burned," containing two internal variants in lines five and six, as indicated by the matching plus mark symbols

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The other two kinds of variation exist between poems rather than within them. Both line and stanza level variants occur in poems which Dickinson sends to more than one of her correspondents or sends to a correspondent and holds for her own records. Line level variants describe a change in either a few words or a full line between versions of a poem. This kind of variation can serve to personalize a poem for a new recipient or context. Stanza level variants occur when Dickinson changes out entire stanzas between versions of her poems, again to personalize the poem for the context. Both of these forms of variation, which occur between fascicle poems, retainer poems, and letter poems are central to my argument, as I go further than even stanza level variation to distinguish poems which differ almost wholly from each other as not variants at all, but entirely distinct poems.

These poems are difficult to understand without looking at the physical manuscripts which Dickinson produced. These manuscripts come in three different types – fascicles, retained manuscripts, and letter poems. The first of these types, the fascicles, were small, hand-bound booklets of poems, which one of Dickinson's early editors, Mabel Loomis Todd, decided to name fascicles.² Dickinson created forty fascicles which in total contain about 800 poems. It is unknown if Dickinson circulated these, or if anyone knew of their existence during her life. The interpretation of these booklets is highly contentious among scholars, as I will discuss in the later sections.

Another type of manuscript which Dickinson produced was kept on retainer, meaning that they were not sewn into a fascicle or circulated among her friends or family. These poems, which no one knew existed until after her death, are thought to have been a selection which Dickinson could rely on if she needed a poem addressing a specific subject in the future. Many scholars think that these poems were not circulated largely because no occasion arose in which to use the poem, not because Dickinson was opposed to the poems' circulation. However, this theory is based largely on speculation, leaving her exact intention for retained poems unclear (Miller 180).

The third context in which Dickinson produced and circulated manuscripts was through her letters. Dickinson commonly sent poems as loose sheets accompanying her letters. She also often included poems within the body of the letter itself, which, though similar, functioned in different ways. Poems exterior to the body of the letter have a clear separation from the letter, and are presented objectively as poems, whereas poems within the body of the letter are almost inextricably linked to the letter itself, making it nearly

² Fascicles generally refer to separately published or created books or stories or poetry

impossible to read the poem outside the context of the letter. Though both poems sent with and within letters serve to deepen and clarify the meaning of the letter in most cases (with the exception of instances when Dickinson sent poems to correspondents specifically for critique), poems written into the body of the letter become part of the letter itself, often making the letter impossible to understand without it. In this way, poems in letters serve as communicative poems more so than poems exterior to the body of the letter, meaning that these letters served as a poetic rendering of the contents of the letter.

Because of these poems with and within letters, at the time of Dickinson's death not all of her poems were stored together or catalogued in a way her editors could readily understand. Since the poems which Dickinson had sent to her correspondents were held by these correspondents rather than by Dickinson herself, and since only a handful of the poems which Dickinson wrote or circulated in any capacity were ever published, early editors did not have the full breadth of Dickinson's work to compile and edit for publication. Given these editors' lack of full context, in addition to the desires of their contemporary audiences, these editors made crucial editorial decisions that would change the way all later scholars read Dickinson. For example, these editors changed Dickinson's spelling, grammar, punctuation, and in some case, rhythm to fit their understanding of poetry. Since these decisions do not exist in a vacuum, later editors of Dickinson are influenced by these early editors, thus making some choices which may not have been authentic to the original manuscript. This story begins in a place which may seem tangential to the issue of Dickinson's manuscripts and literary legacy – Dickinson's brother, Austin, and his affair with a woman named Mabel Loomis Todd.

At the center of both Dickinson's and Austin's affairs was Austin's wife, Susan. Austin was married in 1856 to Susan Gilbert (often called Sue), a woman with a deep and complicated relationship to Dickinson herself. Though it is unclear exactly when and how Sue and Dickinson met, they began to exchange frequent and emotional letters in their early twenties. These letters consisted of the gossip, but also developed into much more romantic sentiments. The two developed what Martha Nell Smith calls a "romantic friendship," which "might be called prototypically lesbian," involving love letters from both women (59). These letters eventually led to Dickinson writing Sue poems resembling love poems and enclosing them in her letters, including poems such as "Show me eternity and I will show you memory-," in which she asks Sue to be hers forever (60). As their correspondence continued, it became more and more clear that Sue likely reciprocated these romantic feelings, leading to her becoming, as Smith describes, her "love" (61). As the two became older, and Sue began to look to marry, Dickinson encouraged Austin and Sue to get married, likely to keep Sue close rather than lose her lover to a man she did not know and risk losing access to Sue. After a strained courtship period, Austin eventually proposed, and Sue reluctantly agreed (Gordon 186).

After their marriage, Sue and Austin resided in a house next door to the one in which Dickinson and her sister, Lavinia, lived, allowing the couple to maintain close contact with Dickinson. After twenty-six years of marriage to Sue, in 1882, Austin began his affair with Todd, a woman who was originally close friends with Sue. The affair, though not technically public, was well known to Sue, Dickinson, and Lavinia, also known as Vinnie. Though biographer Lyndall Gordon believes that Dickinson expressed her hatred for Todd on many occasions, likely because of her loyalty to Sue (Gordon

205), Vinnie supported the affair, allowing Austin and Todd to use rooms in the house she shared with Dickinson several days a week to spend time together and to consummate their affair. This division in loyalties, often referred to as the “war between the houses,” in many ways pitted Austin, Vinnie, and Todd against Sue, with the tension between Todd and Sue at the center. Dickinson herself voiced her disrespect for Todd but did not break her loyalty to Austin or Vinnie, positioning Dickinson as an uncomfortable intermediary (Gordon 204).

After Dickinson’s death in 1886, this tension became much more like a war. Upon discovering the massive quantity of poems which Dickinson had written, Vinnie gave many of them to Sue to edit and compile for publication, a logical choice given the close nature of Sue and Dickinson’s relationship while Dickinson was alive, and the quantity and frequency of poems Dickinson sent to Sue during her lifetime. However, Sue worked slowly, and within a year, Vinnie became impatient, taking the manuscripts back from Sue and giving them instead to Todd, who had experience in editing and publishing poetry. In conjunction with T.W. Higginson, a magazine editor with whom Dickinson corresponded often throughout her life, Todd edited and published the first two editions of Dickinson’s poems, and a third which she edited alone- *Poems* (1890), *Poems Second Series* (1891), and *Poems Third Series* (1896)- in which the poems were grouped by what Todd and Higginson perceived as their theme.

This series of publications did not contain all of Dickinson’s poems, however, due in large part to the great number of poems which Sue had received from Dickinson and which Sue withheld from Todd. Following the deaths of Todd and Sue, their daughters continued this feud, with Sue’s daughter, Martha Dickinson Bianchi, publishing *The*

Single Hound: Poems of a Lifetime (1914), *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1924), *Further Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1929), and *Unpublished Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1935). This string of publications triggered Todd's daughter, Millicent Todd Bingham, to publish *Bolts of Melody: New Poems of Emily Dickinson* in 1945, the edition that ended the enormous string of publications following Dickinson's death.

Just as this feud resulted in a schism in publications, the feud also resulted in a split in Dickinson's manuscripts themselves. Martha Dickinson Bianchi chose to give her collection of manuscripts, containing primarily the fascicles, to Harvard University in 1950. This decision prompted Millicent Todd Bingham to gift her collection of manuscripts to Amherst College in 1956, in an attempt to maintain the distinction between these two collections of poems. This split in archival location makes it difficult for modern editors and scholars to access all Dickinson manuscripts.

In the past sixty years, the editions which scholars have looked to as the authority on Dickinson poems are the Thomas H. Johnson edition (1955), and the R.W. Franklin edition (1998). Though the Franklin edition is now standard, it is important to first understand the Johnson edition as a foundation for the Franklin, which requires understanding Dickinson's complex editorial history. Perhaps the most notable aspect of the Johnson edition is the fact that he published his *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* the year before Millicent gave her collection of manuscripts to Amherst College. However, because of Johnson's friendship with Millicent Todd he was able to access both sets of manuscripts in his edition. Though Johnson did have both sets of manuscripts to edit, due to his loyalty to Millicent, many of the poems in the Johnson edition are exactly the same as the versions published in earlier versions of Dickinson in *Series I – III* and *Bolts of*

Melody, as he did not want to challenge the decisions of Millicent or her mother. Johnson also considered several letters which Dickinson wrote in a certain meter to be poems despite the fact that the letters themselves were not written with line breaks or any indication that they were intended as poems. Within the edition itself, Johnson used relative dating through handwriting analysis to create some degree of chronology among the poems, listing them from oldest to most recent. Since Dickinson did not title her poems, Johnson assigned each poem a number, resulting in the system of referring to Dickinson poems by the letter J for Johnson, followed by the number he assigns (Figure 2).

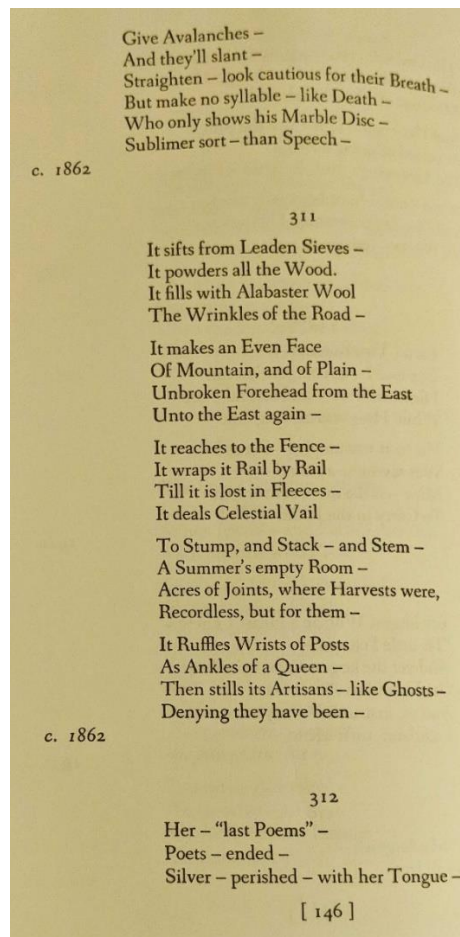


Figure 2: Page from Johnson's *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*

The 1998 Franklin edition, the current scholarly standard, improves upon the Johnson edition in many important ways. For one, Franklin had access to the entire collection of Dickinson manuscripts across both archives without a strong loyalty to the original transcriptions, allowing him to re-transcribe the poems to preserve original line breaks, capitalizations, and themes. Perhaps the most significant contribution Franklin provides, however, is the reconstruction of the fascicles. When Todd first acquired the fascicles, she cut the strings that bound them so that she could reorganize the poems. However, through measuring pin holes and evaluating marks of wear, Franklin determined the content and order of the fascicles, allowing scholars to analyze them in full for the first time. He also published *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson* in 1981, providing the public with access to facsimiles of the manuscripts for the first time, as well as the ability to see the entire fascicle, in order, in manuscript form. Franklin also dismisses the letters which Johnson publishes as poems and constructs his own timeline of when the poems were written, resulting in a new order and numbering of the poems in his edition. Scholars usually use these numbers, referring to poems with an F for Franklin, followed by the number Franklin assigns it.

Franklin usefully updated much of the work done in the Johnson edition, but made one critical error- Franklin accepted Johnson's premise that poems sharing the same first line are the same poem without considering crucial differences between them. Though the need for a standardized way of categorizing poems makes sense, this method ignored the enormous differences between the versions of the poems which this study examines, erasing significant differences in meaning and context. As I will show, using

this shared first line as a means of indicating sameness erases entire poems from the Dickinson canon.

This erasure occurs due to the complex way in which both Johnson and Franklin organized and published editions of Dickinson's poems. Both editors produced two main editions of Dickinson's poems – one known as the variorum, and the other as the reading edition. The reading edition presents the poems in the same way that most poetry anthologies do- with the poems written one after the other on the page, the main difference being that Dickinson's poems are organized by numbers, as I mentioned, rather than titles. The variorum presents the poems in the same order as the reading edition, but rather than choosing one version for each of the poems with various versions or variants, the variorum editions lists all the extant versions and variants of all Dickinson's poems. In the variorum edition, readers can decide for themselves which version or variant they would like to read and how they would like to interpret those differences. In the reading edition, all those decisions have already been made for the reader.

It may seem that the existence of a variorum at all makes my argument irrelevant – after all, if all the different poems and versions Dickinson wrote are available to the public, why does it matter whether they are different poems or not? As it turns out, it matters a great deal. Since the variorum contains mostly word and line level variants, as these were the most common forms of variation in Dickinson's poetry, nearly all students and scholars of Dickinson refer to the reading edition when studying her poetry rather than sifting through the three volumes of the variorum. This means that any affiliate poems which Dickinson wrote do not appear in the reading edition, and thus receive no

attention from students or scholars. Though the variorum edition does contain these poems, they are absorbed by the base poem, and thus remain virtually unpublished. Since these poems are only seen by the rare scholar or student who reads deeply into the variorum, the poem does not circulate to the general readership of Dickinson and is not studied by scholars.

In examining these issues of context and sameness, I will be relying heavily on the work of Virginia Jackson, Alexandra Socarides, and Martha Nell Smith. All three of these scholars consider the importance of the context in which a poem appears in understanding the intended meaning of the poem in the time it was written. These scholars argue, as Jackson puts it, that the poems in their original form and context “mark not only the absence of the person who touched [the manuscripts] but the presence of what touched that person” (3), suggesting that pulling any nineteenth-century poet, especially Dickinson, out of the context in which she was originally read erases key aspects of the poem’s meaning that could be gleaned from the letter, fascicle, or historical time in which the poem appeared. Additionally, as these scholars also suggest, I will examine the publication history of the poems in this study to see how this history shapes the way other scholars as well as myself perceive these poems, as “print itself” is now “the context in which... the text will be recognized” (Jackson 32).

Terminology is very important to Dickinson poems, as scholars use many similar words to refer to different types of poems. As described above, “variants” refers to different wordings either within or between versions. “Versions” of a poem refers to poems that were written out and distributed or stored separately that, because of their variants, are considered the same poem appearing in different contexts. It is important to

note that, while variants make the meaning of poems somewhat different, and versions cause them to appear in different contexts, both these terms refer to poems which scholars consider the same base poem. This study examines poems which share a first line but are otherwise different from one another, meaning that they share some language, but, I argue, are still different poems. Therefore, to highlight the link between these poems as well as their defining differences, I will use “affiliate poem(s)” to refer to these poems which share a first line, or near first line, but are still different poems.

In this thesis I will first discuss the affiliate poems beginning with the line “I hide myself within my flower,” (F80) which appear in Fascicle 3 and Fascicle 40, in order to show the way in which affiliate poems function in different fascicles. I will then move to discuss the poem “A little East of Jordan” (F145) to provide an example of a poem in two versions rather than affiliate poems that still share a significant amount of language. Next, I will discuss the affiliate poems beginning with the line “It sifts from Leaden Sieves,” (F291) examining the way affiliate poems function in the private publication of a fascicle and in being sent to a publisher. I will then discuss the poems “Brother of Ophir,” “Sister of Ophir – Ah Peru -” and “Brother of Ingots – Ah Peru -,” (F1462) all of which Franklin considers the same poem despite their different first lines, to show the way affiliate poems function in correspondence. Through these four case studies, this thesis will show the way in which using the first line of Dickinson poems as identifiers erases affiliate poems that appear in many different contexts.

“I hide myself within my flower”: Reading Affiliates in the Fascicles

“I hide myself with my flower” (F80) exists in what scholars generally consider three variant version – the first in Fascicle 3, the second on retainer, and the third in Fascicle 40. The first and third versions of these poems, likely written in 1859 and 1864 respectively, bear the greatest difference to one another. (Shown with differences bolded below.) These poems provide an interesting case study not only for their differences in content, but also because Dickinson placed them in two different fascicles. Dickinson very rarely placed the same poem in two different fascicles, and even less frequently placed them in two so chronologically far from one another.

Fascicle 3:

I hide myself within my flower
That **wearing on** your **breast** -
You - unsuspecting, **wear me too** -
And angels know the rest!

Fascicle 40:

I hide myself - within my flower,
That **fading from** your **Vase** -
You - unsuspecting - **feel for me** -
Almost - a loneliness –

Before turning to the fascicles, it is important to note that the version of the poem held on retainer, which differs from the Fascicle 40 poem only in its punctuation, was prepped to send with a flower, with two small holes in the manuscripts so a flower could be pinned to it, but was never sent (Variorum).³ This implies that the poem was intended to accompany a flower, but never seems to have appeared in a context with one. Further, this absence implies that both fascicle poems are meant to have the notable absence of the flower, and therefore the reader understands that the poem is inherently missing the presence of the flower it should or could contain.

³ Citations which read “Variorum” are in reference to R.W. Franklin’s *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, variorum edition. These intext citations are presented this way because of the similarity of this citation to that of the reading edition of the same title.

However, the fact that scholars have not uncovered an instance of Dickinson sending out the poem with a flower does not mean that she never did, as a great number of Dickinson's letters have not survived. Therefore, it is important to examine what this poem would mean as a gift poem so as to understand how the fascicle context complicates this meaning. The retainer version of this poem reads:

I hide Myself within my flower,
That fading from your Vase,
You, unsuspecting, feel for me -
Almost a loneliness.

differing from the Fascicle 40 version only in the absence of dashes within the lines.

Given the short nature of the poem and the fact that it directly addresses the flower with which it would be given directly, reading this as a gift poem is fairly straightforward. The speaker claims that they "hide" "within [the] flower," suggesting that the person gifting the flower "hide[s]" their true feelings or intentions in the "flower" which they gift. This suggestion of concealing something of the person in the flower alludes strongly to the language of flowers which was prominent at the time, likely meaning to indicate that the recipient of the flower and poem should glean symbolic meaning of the giver's feelings from the type of flower gifted to them. For example, roses indicated love, while carnations indicated strength and healing. The poem goes on to acknowledge the limitations of the flower, saying that it will begin to "fad[e]" from the recipient's "Vase" as it wilts and dies. As the first line of the poem indicates that the flower is symbolic of the speaker, the loss of the flower results in a distance of the recipient from the speaker, causing them to feel a "loneliness" for the speaker. This "loneliness" seems to surprise the recipient, however, as the recipient is "unsuspecting" of the feeling, given that the death of the flower is not actually the same as the death of the giver or their relationship with them.

This reading of the poem as a gift poem differs significantly from the meaning of the poem and its affiliate in the fascicle context. In her book, *Choosing Not Choosing: Dickinson's Fascicles* (1992), Cameron argues that in the context of the fascicle, poems lose a discreet identity, and must then be understood in the context of, or more specifically, as part of, the other poems in the fascicle (21). Because of this, Cameron argues that poems that appear in more than one fascicle are “similar, but not the same” (6), as they appear in two entirely separate contexts and thereby do not share the same poetic identity. The core of Cameron’s argument centers on the notion that a reader cannot choose between variants in Dickinson’s poetry because Dickinson herself did not choose, and thus that each poem in a fascicle should be read as a variant version of every other poem in the fascicle (42). Therefore, by Cameron’s definition, every one of Dickinson’s poems that share a central theme or idea are the same poem, an aspect of Cameron’s argument against which my argument pushes back.

I choose to analyze the sheet rather than the entire fascicle, calling upon the work of Socarides, who stresses the unit of the sheet, in her book *Dickinson Unbound: Paper, Process, and Poetics* (2012). Socarides advocates for the sheet for several reasons—for one, Dickinson chose to make the fascicles herself rather than copy her poems into a premade notebook or scrapbook (30). The decision to structure her own booklet suggests that Dickinson had a specific vision for how the poems fit on the sheet in a way she could not control in a booklet she did not sew herself. Even more importantly, Dickinson bound her fascicles by stacking the sheets rather than nesting them, going against the traditional book binding practices of the time (32), further suggesting that “she did not necessarily

have the unit of the book in mind” (34). Socarides points out that this practice of stacking rather than nesting pages was the same one that pastors used to preserve their sermons:

Ministers throughout New England in the early- and mid-nineteenth century wrote their sermons on pieces of folded stationery and, when they were finished, stacked these sheets and sewed them together.... [T]he sermon writer could go back and remove or revise part of the sermon while keeping all the other sections intact. If the pages had been inserted, it would have been impossible to remove a section of the sermon. (32-3)

Two years prior to beginning work on the fascicles, Dickinson met a pastor named Charles Wadsworth, who shared his sermons with her when the two met in Washington DC and continued to share them throughout the subsequent years (Sewell 451-2). As Wadsworth was a pastor, and therefore was very likely to have stored his sermons in the way Socarides describes, the decision for Dickinson to store her poems in much the same fashion shortly after she begins to receive Wadsworth’s sermons could not be a coincidence, especially since Socarides argues that Dickinson began “developing a sense of how she wanted to organize her poems” (24) in the years leading up to when she began producing fascicles. Finally, after Dickinson stopped making fascicles in 1864, she continued to store her poems on loose, folded sheets like those placed in the fascicle, suggesting once again that the fascicle was a means of storing the sheets rather than a continuous narrative or collection (Socarides 112).⁴

Therefore, in understanding the meaning of the Fascicle 3 affiliate of “I hide myself within my flower,” I turn to the sheet on which it appears. Fascicle 3 consists of

⁴Socarides is not alone in regarding the sheet as an important unit. Though Cameron argues that the fascicle as a whole is most important, she also acknowledges that the unit of the sheet provides important perspective (Cameron 17). Similarly, when Franklin initially determined the order of the sheets in each fascicle, he also regarded the sheet as the most important aspect of understanding the fascicle (Socarides 36), further supporting the notion that the sheet provides more meaningful analytical context than the fascicle as a whole.

twenty-three poems across four sheets, with the poem in question appearing on the second sheet. This sheet contains “Angels, in the early morning” (F73), “My nosegays are for Captives -” (F74), “Sexton! My Master’s sleeping here” (F75), “The rainbow never tells me” (F76), “One dignity delays for all -” (F77) “As by the dead we love to sit -” (F78), “New feet within my garden go -” (F79), and “I hide myself within my flower” (F80) in this order (*Emily Dickinson’s Poems* 54-6). Eight poems to a sheet is a high volume for Dickinson, suggesting that she very intentionally grouped these poems together. Because of the high number of poems on the sheet, the poems appear in smaller script than usual and are closer together than those in other fascicles. This further supports the notion that the sheet mattered greatly to Dickinson’s organizational logic.

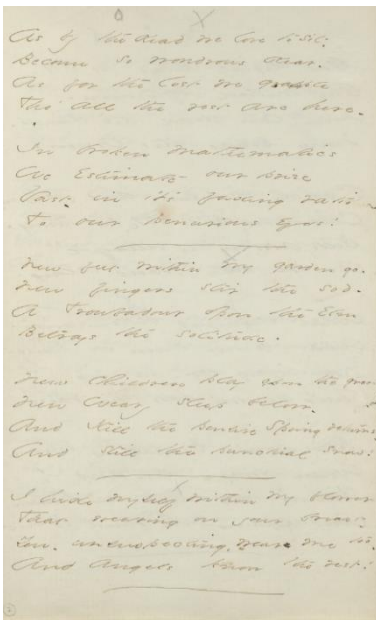


Figure 3: Back-side of folded Fascicle 3 sheet containing "I hide myself within my flower"
Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

The Fascicle 3 version of “I hide myself within my flower” centers on the image of the flower in which the speaker is hidden, and the “angels” who “know the rest!”

which act as an expression of some unspecified joy, as indicated by the exclamation point:

I hide myself within my flower
That wearing on your breast -
You - unsuspecting, wear me too -
And angels know the rest!

This joy is contrasted directly with the “unsuspecting” “you” in the poem, who does not know the truth that the angels know, even though the “you” “wear[s]” the speaker of the poem. Though the speaker is very small given the fact that they can “hide” themselves inside a flower, this smallness does not keep them from connecting with the “you” in the poem, as the “you” “wears” the flower on his or her “breast,” a very intimate place to rest. However, this closeness is undermined as the “you” is “unsuspecting” of the speaker, thus distancing him or herself, though perhaps unintentionally.

Importantly, the speaker of the poem hides *themselves* within *their own* flower, suggesting that being inside the flower is a preferable place for the speaker to the outside world, and that the flower belongs to them outside of the fact that they now reside within it. It also seems that the “you” of the poem knows that the flower belongs to the speaker in some sense, though they are “unsuspecting” that the speaker rests inside the flower. It is clear that the “you” has a strong affinity for the speaker, as they want to bring the flower of the speaker close to themselves and to “wear” it. The only entities besides the speaker who seem to know that the speaker is in the flower are “angels” who “know the rest!” perhaps referring to the speaker’s presence inside the flower.

The question remains what the flower in this poem symbolizes, which other poems on this same sheet can usefully clarify. The first poem on the sheet, “Angels, in

the early morning,” addresses both flowers and angels, similar to the way the final poem does:

Angels, in the early morning
 May be seen the Dews among,
 Stooping - plucking - smiling - flying -
 Do the Buds to them belong?

Angels, when the sun is hottest
 May be seen the sands among,
 Stooping - plucking - sighing - flying -
 Parched the flowers they bear along.

In this poem, the “angels” “pluck” the “Buds” because they think they “belong” to them, which results in the “flowers” they have picked becoming “parched” and thus dying, or at least becoming inaccessible to the angels. Through trying to pull the “flowers” from the human to the angelic world, the flowers have moved out of their reach. This poem thus suggests that the angels in “I hide myself within my flower” serve to remove the flower from the “you.” Since the speaker has such an intimate connection to the flower, calling it “my” and retreating inside it, it seems that the speaker will also retreat from the “you.” The image of the angels is also significant, however, as Dickinson could have used a much darker image for this separation, but instead chose the positive image of an angel. This suggests that even though the two separate, this separation is not totally negative. Dickinson could have used an image of a pit, darkness, or other looming threat as a metaphor for separation, but instead she uses a flower, something that is usually intended to bring joy. This lack of negative imagery makes the poem more positive than it had to be given the message, suggesting that there are positive aspects to the separation.

This reading is supported as well by the sixth poem on the sheet, “As by the dead we love to sit -:”

As by the dead we love to sit -
 Become so wondrous dear -
 As for the lost we grapple
 Tho' all the rest are here -

In broken mathematics
 We estimate our prize
 Vast - in it's fading ratio
 To our penurious eyes!

This poem stresses the way in which the living dwell on those who have been separated from them through death, as they “love to sit” “by” them, as they “grapple” with the idea of their own mortality and ideology. The living also “estimate” their “prize,” trying to figure out if they will go to heaven. The living in this poem parallel the “you” in “I hide myself within my flower,” who obsesses over the flower, placing it on their “breast,” not for the good of the speaker who is inside the flower, who gains nothing through the closeness, but for themselves, to get closer to a deceased person or to the speaker who is “hid[ing]” from the “you.”

However, the metaphorical meaning of the flower is still unclear. “The rainbow never tells me” clarifies this meaning, mentioning “flowers” explicitly in the poem:

The rainbow never tells me
 That gust and storm are by -
 Yet is she more convincing
 Than Philosophy.

My flowers turn from Forums -
 Yet eloquent declare
 What Cato could'nt prove me
 Except the birds were here!

The first stanza of the poem addresses the fact that the speaker does not trust the hopes of others, but trusts them more than religion, saying that “the rainbow [hopes of others] never” tells them when bad things have truly passed, but “convince” them “more” “Than

Philosophy [religion].” Though the combination of “Philosophy” and “Forums” does suggest a reading of philosophy as classical philosophy, according to the Emily Dickinson Lexicon, in other cases Dickinson uses “Philosophy” to mean religion. Further, in this case, the combination of the image of the “rainbow” as a possible invocation of the rainbow Noah sees from the ark, as well as the religious context of the sheet strongly indicates that in this case “philosophy” refers to religious philosophy, and thus organized religion. The speaker then moves to focus on themselves, saying that “My flowers,” or the speaker’s own hopes and beliefs, “turn from Forums,” which symbolize once again the views of others, because even the best orator of the ancient world, “Cato” could not “prove” that the speaker’s beliefs were incorrect.

Clarifying “I hide myself within my flower” using this understanding of the flower as the speaker’s own hopes and beliefs, the poem takes on a clearer meaning. The speaker takes refuge “within” their own understanding of religion, which causes the “you” to try to bring these beliefs closer to their own, thus placing the “flower” on their “breast.” In trying to “pluck” the beliefs from the speaker, the relationship between the speaker and the “you” is “parched,” leading to a distance between the two. This parting is made more tragic by the fact that the “you” figure “unsuspecting[ly]” “wear[s]” many of the same views as the speaker, something only “angels” from beyond the grave can “know.” This reference to “angels” also harkens back to “Angels, in the early morning,” where the angels learn that trying to pull the “flowers” closer to themselves only ruins their relationship with them, as the “you” in “I hide myself within my flower” also learns. In this way, the line “And angels know the rest!” serves to explain that, as the angels from the first poem know, this poem ends much like the first, as the “you” makes the

same mistake the angels did. The poem ends in an exclamation point, indicating the speaker's surprise that the "you" does not realize that they are distancing themselves from the speaker, and as a means of intensifying the assertion that the actions of the "you" parallel those of the angels.

Turning to the Fascicle 40 affiliate, I once again examine the sheet on which the poem appears. Fascicle 40 consists of twenty-one poems over six sheets, with "I hide myself – within my flower" appearing on the third sheet. In contrast to Fascicle 3, Fascicle 40 provides much more space to each poem – each is written in larger handwriting and with greater space between each one. Because of this, there are fewer poems on each sheet, as made clear by the fact that Fascicle 40 has two less poems than Fascicle 3 but has two more sheets.

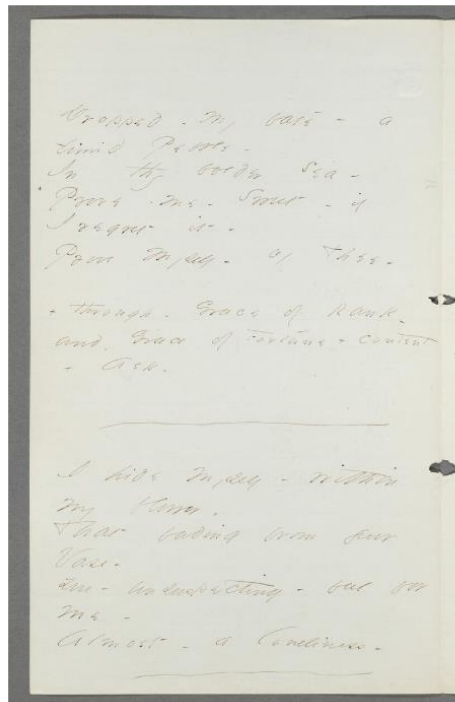


Figure 4: Middle left of unfolded Fascicle 40 sheet containing "I hide myself within my flower"
Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

This can mostly be attributed to the fact that all of Dickinson's handwriting had become larger and more spaced apart by 1864, due to her deteriorating eyesight (Gordon 155), but it is also important to consider the possibility that she wished to place fewer poems on each sheet because each poem requires fewer poems for context. For example, in Fascicle 40, "I hide myself within my flower" appears with three other poems on the sheet, whereas in Fascicle 3 it appears with seven others. Placing half the number of poems on the sheet as compared to Fascicle 3 makes a clear statement that the poems on the Fascicle 40 sheet are more closely related than those on the Fascicle 3 sheet. The poems on this sheet are "All forgot for recollecting" (F827), "I hide myself – within my flower" (F80), "Had I not This, or This, I said" (F828), and "Between my country – and the Others –" (F829) in this order (*Emily Dickinson's Poems* 408-9).

This version of "I hide myself within my flower" shares the notion that the speaker is quite small, and has hidden themselves within their own flower, as indicated by the shared first line:

I hide myself - within my flower,
That fading from your Vase -
You - unsuspecting - feel for me -
Almost - a loneliness –

Immediately, however, this line differs from the version in Fascicle 3, as a dash appears between the declaration of hiding and the location of the flower. Though the speaker is going within the flower and is thus deeply connected to it, there is a separation between the two, as though the speaker is unsure about their connection to the flower, and thus wants to provide some distance between themselves and the flower they hide within. Similarly, the "you" figure in this poem places the flower in a "Vase," something far from their body, rather than on their "breast" as they did in the first version, again

enforcing this idea of a physical distance between things. The “you” continues to be distanced as they are “unsuspecting” of something that causes them to “feel for” the speaker “a loneliness,” but only “almost.” These lines further the distance established at the beginning of the poem by showing that the “you” does not listen to or acknowledge the speaker, feeling “for” them instead of hearing their feelings, and then only “almost” feeling at all.

As with the Fascicle 3 version, there are several questions in the poem which need to be answered by other poems on the sheet. The poem does not answer what the “flower” is symbolic of, why the “you” is “unsuspecting,” or why they feel “for” the speaker “almost – a loneliness.” “All forgot for recollecting,” sheds some light on the reason why the speaker is so small in “I hide myself – within my flower,” as it uses similar language of smallness, saying “paltry One,” “Home effaced,” “faces dwindled,” “altered small,” “shattered,” “overlooked,” and “timid pebble:”

All forgot for recollecting
 Just a paltry One -
 All forsook, for just a Stranger's
 New Accompanying –

Grace of Wealth, and Grace of Station
 Less accounted than
 An unknown Esteem possessing -
 Estimate - Who can –

Home effaced - Her faces dwindled -
 Nature - altered small -
 Sun - if shone - or Storm - if shattered -
 Overlooked I all –

Dropped - my fate - a timid Pebble -
 In thy bolder Sea -
 Prove - me - Sweet - if I regret it -

Prove Myself - of Thee -

These references to smallness are in the face of “Grace of Wealth, and Grace of Station,” “Esteem,” and “thy bolder sea,” all of which seem to be references to God or some sort of higher power. The speaker, who has “forgotten” “all” to think of God, observes that they would “overlook” the “storm,” or negative aspects, of God if it meant that they could place their “fate” in God’s “bolder sea” and thus “prove” themselves to God. The speaker of this poem, like that of “I hide myself – within my flower,” makes themselves small, in this case as they become aware of the greatness of God and their comparable smallness, as even “Nature” is “altered small” in the face of God.

Given this context, the smallness in “I hide myself – within my flower” is likely also caused by an awe of God, and the comparative smallness of everything given the greatness of God. This religious context continues in “Between My Country – and the Others -,” which discusses “flowers” and “ministry:”

Between My Country - and the Others -
 There is a Sea -
 But Flowers - negotiate between us -
 As Ministry.

In this context, the “flowers” are used to “negotiate between us,” where the meaning of “us” is slightly unclear. Given the preceding lines, the “us” seems to refer to the speaker’s country “and the Others,” but could also be between the speaker and the “Sea” that rests between them and the other countries. However, what seems most likely is that the “us” refers to all three – “my country,” “the Others,” and the “Sea,” as this poem serves to expand out of the smallness of domestic and personal spaces in the other poems by instead focusing on the entire “country” and “the Others.” In this poem, the “flowers”

act as “Ministry,” bridging the gaps between the three in a religious way. Giving “flowers” the meaning of a symbol of religious connection contrasting smallness and isolation, in the context of “I hide myself – within my flower,” “flowers” seem to refer to a way for the speaker to try to connect with the “you” in the poem.

The question still remains why the “you” in the poem feels so far from the speaker when the speaker tries to become closer to them in a religious way. Turning to the last poem on the sheet – “Had I not This, or This, I said,” – provides a final perspective on the poem:

Had I not This, or This, I said,
Appealing to Myself,
In moment of prosperity -
Inadequate - were Life –

"Thou hast not Me, nor Me" - it said,
In moment of Reverse -
"And yet Thou art industrious -
No need - hadst Thou - of us -"?

My need - was all I had - I said
The need did not reduce -
Because the food - exterminate -
The hunger - does not cease –

But diligence - is sharper -
Proportioned to the chance -
To feed upon the Retrograde -
Enfeebles - the Advance -

The speaker in this poem feels a deep need for some unnamed “this,” without which they feel “life” is incomplete. The thing the speaker thinks they need responds to the speaker, saying that they cannot have them, but also do not need them, a response the speaker does not accept, saying that their need does not “exterminate.” In the end, the speaker

begrudgingly decides to move on, saying that the “retrograde” of the past “enfeebles” their ability to “advance.” Given the other poems, it seems that the “need” described in this poem must be something that impedes religious growth, such as a “need” for worldly possessions, making “that advance” a movement toward heaven.

With this poem to round out the context of “I hide myself – within my flower,” the “you” in the poem seems to be focused on the worldly nature of the flower, which is insignificant, rather than focusing on the religious meaning which the speaker strives to give it by “hiding” themselves within it. The “you” places the flower in a “Vase” in an attempt to prolong the life of the flower, separating it from themselves, rather than accepting its mortality and using its life to get closer to it. Further, the “you” is “unsuspecting” of the deeper religious meaning of the flower, causing them to feel more distant from the speaker without the “ministry” of the flower, thus making them feel “a loneliness” “for” the speaker in their temporary gift. However, much like the attitude of the speaker at the start of “Had I not This, or This, I said,” this speaker does not understand that the earthly flower does not matter in comparison to the greatness of God, and that the real importance of the flower is as “ministry” between them and the speaker metaphorically “within” it. If the “you” understood, as explained in the first poem, that compared to God, “nature” is “small,” they would disregard the flower and embrace the symbolic value, bringing them closer to, rather than further from, the speaker.

Given this analysis, these two affiliates differ in many meaningful ways. Though both deal with the theme of religion and separation, they address it in very different ways. The Fascicle 3 affiliate addresses the way in which a lack of acceptance of the beliefs of others can lead to a destruction of the relationship between people. The Fascicle 40

affiliate of this poem addresses the way in which misunderstanding the possibility of connecting to others through religion can lead to negative outcomes for those missing the opportunity. Though these subjects are related, the action of the poems are very different. In the Fascicle 3 affiliate, the “you” in the poem tries to bring the speaker closer to them almost against the speaker’s will, resulting in the deterioration of the relationship, whereas in the Fascicle 40 version the speaker initiates contact, which the “you” misunderstands, and subsequently rejects, causing a one-sided deterioration. These two versions show two different ways in which religion can negatively affect the relationships between people, and though they have the same outcome, the methods are much different.

Aside from the different methods of the actors in these poems, the other poems on the sheet also clarify aspects of the meaning- without the poems on the sheet, they gain an entirely different meaning. Further, the other poems on these two different sheets have drastically different meanings than those on the other sheet. Because of this, it is impossible to argue that these two were intended to be the same poem, even without the differences in language and method. As Cameron notes, the fascicle changes the identity of the poem – if these two affiliates were swapped within these two fascicles, they would both hold an entirely different meaning. To argue that they are the same ignores the decision of Dickinson to place them in different contexts.

Therefore, because of the difference in methods of the actors in the poems and the drastic differences in context, these two versions should be considered to be two different poems. In fact, I am not the first person to notice that these two poems are distinct from one another. When Mabel Loomis Todd published *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Series*

One, she published the two “I hide myself within my flower” poems as two stanzas of the same poem titled by Todd as “With A Flower.” Though this ignores the meaning of these affiliate poems and their contexts in many ways, it does acknowledge that these two poems share so little that readers should read them both rather than forcing editors to choose between them. It was only in the more recent editions of Dickinson, when editors decided to use first lines as an indication of sameness, that these two poems became conflated as one poem, making this poem a very good example of when the use of first lines as an identification system fails.

The question still remains as to why Dickinson would include the same first line in these two poems if they are not the same. It is possible that the shared first line might mean to call attention to the fact that both these poems lack a physical flower, though that is what the reader would expect to accompany the poem. The shared first line may serve to underscore the distance between speaker and the you in both poems, as the you may expect to receive a flower, but does not, in both cases. Both these poems address distance and disconnection, suggesting that the shared first line may mean to show the different ways in which this distance can manifest, showing two different, but related, kinds of absence.

Like “I hide myself within my flower,” the versions of the poem “A little over Jordan” share little of the same language and appear in different contexts depending on that language. However, unlike “I hide myself within my flower,” the two versions of this poem are in fact versions rather than affiliate poems. I will use this poem to establish what makes poems version of one another rather than affiliates through examining this example of revision and variation that does not lead to distinct poems. Scholars who

examine variation and revision, such as Smith and Socarides, observe that Dickinson's revisions usually lead to separate versions, as "[i]n almost all cases, when she was finished copying [the final version or versions of the poem], she destroyed her earlier drafts" (Socarides 23). This suggests that this poem is in two versions rather than undergoing revisions that requires one poem to replace the other, as both versions were copied, one for correspondence and one for a fascicle, with neither being permanently destroyed.

To further highlight the difference between affiliates and versions, I will examine the two versions of a poem with two slightly different first lines – "A little East of Jordan" and "A little over Jordan" (shown with differences bolded below). One of the most consequential differences between these two versions of the poem is the fact that Dickinson did not produce the two versions for the same audience – "A little East of Jordan" went to Susan and "A little over Jordan" was placed in Fascicle 7. This difference in context, however, does not change the meaning of the poem. Though the letter accompanying the version sent to Susan has not survived, it is important to note that Susan's reply to the poem does not include suggested revisions, despite the fact that "[a]t the behest of Susan, Dickinson [often] revised poem[s]" (Smith 58). Smith notes that correspondences between Dickinson and Susan containing a poem often lead to Susan critiquing the poem, something Smith calls a "workshop" (Smith 60). Dickinson often took these suggestions, revising the poem to create a new version, or changing the poem altogether. This collaboration went so far as for Dickinson to "christe[n] herself and Sue 'Combined Girls' for their artistic affinities" (Smith 60). However, the absence of such a workshop in this case suggests that the later version of the poem was not a revision

intended to replace the version sent to Susan, but rather a separate version intended to operate as the same poem, changed slightly for its context. The version placed in Fascicle 7, though appearing in a separate context, contains the same meaning as the version sent to Susan as the sheet primarily considers religious stories, as I will show both versions do.

Susan:

A little **over** Jordan,
As Genesis record,
An Angel and a Wrestler
 Did wrestle long and hard.

Till, morning touching mountain,
 And Jacob waxing strong,
 The Angel begged permission
 To breakfast **and** return.

Not so, **quoth wily** Jacob
And girt his loins anew,
"Until thou bless me, stranger!"
 The which acceded to:

Light swung the silver fleeces
Peniel hills among,
 And the **astonished Wrestler**
 Found he had worsted God!

Fascicle 7:

A little **East of** Jordan,
Evangelists record,
A Gymnast and an Angel
 Did wrestle long and hard –

Till morning touching mountain -
 And Jacob, waxing strong,
 The Angel begged permission
 To Breakfast - **to** return!

Not so, **said cunning** Jacob!
"I will not let thee go
Except though bless me" - Stranger!
 The which acceded to –

Light swung the silver fleeces
"Peniel" Hills beyond,
 And the **bewildered Gymnast**
 Found he had worsted God!

A notable difference between these poems is that they do not share the exact same first line, meaning that system of identifying these poems by their first line does not succeed in correctly identifying these poems. However, the difference here does not change the identity of the poems – the replacement of “East of” with “over” between the versions changes the location of the action very slightly but does not change the important distinction that this event is happening near, but not in, Jordan. This difference,

unlike the differences between affiliate poems, does not change the intention behind the poem, merely clarifying the poem in slightly different ways for the context in which it appears.

Unfortunately, since the letter accompanying the version sent to Susan has not survived, it is difficult to examine this version in context. However, the changes made between these two versions are largely synonymous, though the choices made in the Susan version are much less dramatic than those in the Fascicle 7 version. The version sent to Susan sticks by the Bible story with few, if any, opinions of the events in the story. For example, the poem states that the story comes straight from “Genesis,” describing the interactions of an “Angel and a Wrestler,” as opposed to a “Gymnast.” In this respect, wrestler is a simple description of the actions taken by Jacob in the Bible story, whereas gymnast ascribes a grace and respect to the actions that places the speaker on a side of the action.

In the later stanza of the poem, Dickinson chooses to include less dialogue than she does in the Fascicle 7 version, once again showing a greater alliance to objectivity in the Susan version. This change is the only other in the poem that modifies meaning even slightly – the other changes between the versions alter the language of the poem without changing the meaning by swapping out some words with synonyms. Despite these differences between these two versions, both focus on the story of Jacob wrestling an angel sent from heaven. The two wrestle all night until “morning,” with Jacob winning, leaving him “waxing strong.” The angel “begs” to rest and come back, which Jacob refuses, resulting in Jacob demanding the angel “bless” him. When the angel concedes,

Jacob continues on with his life, but, now that he has the responsibility of dealing with the blessing, he discovers that things are better than he thought.

The other remaining question about these versions is why the Fascicle 7 version would adopt a less objective tone. To answer this question, I will turn to sheet one of Fascicle 7, where this poem appears. Understanding the poem in the context of the sheet will allow me to show that the poem does not change meaning in a substantial way in the other context. “A little East of Jordan” is the first poem on the first sheet of Fascicle 7, opening the fascicle with this claim of Jacob’s strength that is very sympathetic to Jacob rather than to the angel that tries to conquer him. Through describing Jacob as a “Gymnast,” and giving him more dialogue, the Fascicle 7 version portrays Jacob with a greater degree of grace and humanity than in the first version, taking the focus away from the power of God and instead shifting it to the power of humanity. Within the context of the sheet, this transition makes sense, as the rest of the sheet examines the relationship between humanity and the divine. For example, the poem following “A little East of Jordan” on the sheet, “All overgrown by cunning moss” (F146), addresses writers which Dickinson admires as blessed by God and living in a sort of garden of “Eden.” The poem addresses “Bronte” by name, suggesting that through her “wanderings” in the craft of writing, she has found “Eden” on earth, making it an especially grand day in “Heaven/ When ‘Bronte’ entered there!” Dickinson portrays these humans like she does Jacob- as so powerful through their grace and beauty that they have the power to excite the angels in heaven.

The following three poems on the sheet challenge the power of humans, however, beginning with “A science – so the Savans say” (F147). The first stanza of the poem

focuses on the claims of human “science,” stressing the idea that through science “a single bone” becomes “a secret to unfold,” concentrating on the claim of humans to understand nature through science. The second stanza, however, challenges this claim over nature by emphasizing that humans cannot understand the depth and beauty of divine creation, illustrating the beauty of “Rose[s] and Lil[ies]” as well as “butterfl[ies]” to show the lack of understanding gained by science, and thus the insufficiency of human comprehension. The next poem on the sheet, “Will there really be a ‘morning’?” (F148) portrays a human who has realized their lack of knowledge of the divine, resorting to asking questions about the beauty of nature, such as, “Is there such a thing as ‘Day’?/ Could I see it from the mountains/ If I were as tall as they?/ Has it feet like Water lilies?” All these questions are described as coming from a “Pilgrim” who is trying to find their way to God, suggesting that these questions serve to find clarity, rather than power, unlike the first poems on the sheet.

The final poem on the sheet, “Great Caesar! Condescend” (F149), returns to the tone of the first, however, as it addresses “Caesar,” asking him to gain dominion over a “daisy.” The poem also describes him as “majestic,” a word often used to describe the divine instead reattributed to a human figure. The poem’s stress of the human, Caesar, over nature in a way God is normally portrayed harkens back to the story of Jacob from the beginning of the sheet, showing that the poems on the sheet have not come to the conclusion that God holds power superior to that of humanity.

This return to the power of humanity at the end of the sheet after the departure from it in the middle gives an extra power to the story of Jacob and the angel. Given this context, the story holds more power than just a Bible story – the poem signifies the

abandonment of the understanding of the power of God by humanity through their desire to conquer nature and the divine. However, while this does differ slightly from the message of the version sent to Susan, the version sent to Susan is not devoid of this meaning. Though the implication is not as strong as that in the version placed in Fascicle 7, the Bible story itself can hold this interpretation regardless of the specifics of the context. Though there are many adjustments in language between these two versions, the changes do not alter the plot, themes, implications, or substantial portions of the meaning, causing both the versions to hold the same meaning.

In this case, the significance of the alteration in verbiage between the two versions of the poem was simply to clarify the story within the two contexts in which it appears. The differences cause the poems to fit more aptly in their context, but do not modify the meaning of the poem in any substantial way, confirming that they are versions of the same poem rather than affiliate poems. This distinction is important – since the versions have changes in language that are largely synonymous, and do not have substantially different contextual meanings, these versions mean the same thing, even if they do not say the exact same thing. This is different than affiliate poems because affiliate poems have differences in language that alter the core meaning of the poem, and changes in context that modify the core identity of the poem as well. As neither of these two things occur for the “A little over Jordan”/ “A little East of Jordan” poem, these are versions rather than affiliates, despite the difference in first line. This case study provides clarity to the difference between versions and affiliates, as well as serves as further evidence that the first line of Dickinson poems does not serve as adequate identifiers.

It sifts from Leaden Sieves: Affiliates in Public vs. Private Publication

Like “A little over Jordan”/ “A little East of Jordan,” “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” was circulated through a fascicle and through letters. However, unlike “A little over Jordan”/ “A little East of Jordan,” “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” existed in two unique contexts and contains almost completely distinct language. Significantly, “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” was sent to Thomas Niles for possible publication, giving it a public context which the affiliates beginning “I hide myself within my flower” lack, as they both appear in fascicles which were likely never circulated. In this section, I will examine the relationship between public and private publication in relation to affiliate poems.

Dickinson composed the first version of “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” in 1862, enclosing the poem in a letter to Susan (Variorum). The following year, Dickinson placed a slightly revised version in Fascicle 24, which largely maintains the same language as the version sent to Susan. However, in 1865 Dickinson heavily altered the poem, writing the new version in pencil and keeping it on retainer with her other poems rather than in a fascicle. This version, which retains only the first four lines of the original version, serves as the basis for the last two versions. The fourth iteration of the poem, sent to T.W. Higginson in 1871, adds stanza breaks and slightly more punctuation, but otherwise modifies only a couple of the words in the poem. The fifth and final version, sent to Thomas Niles in 1883, once again modifies the punctuation of the poem and switches a few words, but otherwise greatly resembles the 1865 version (Variorum).

Through examining these five versions, it becomes clear that the most significant differences in the content and form of the poem come with the 1862 and 1863 versions versus the 1865, 1871, and 1883 versions. When Dickinson mailed her poem to Niles in

1883, she did so with the intention of publication (Sewall 584), thus making it clear that this version presents the clearest view of how Dickinson intended the poem to read for her public audience. In contrast, the fascicle version of 1863 exists in the realm of her personal publication, and thus is complete in a different way. As Dickinson prepared these two affiliates for some form of publication rather than personal use, these two affiliates provide the most insight into the decisions Dickinson makes in this case. The 1863 and 1883 poems are shown with differences bolded below:

Fascicle 24:

It sifts from Leaden Sieves -
 It powders all the **Field** -
 It fills with Alabaster Wool
 The Wrinkles of the Road -

It makes an even face
Of Mountain - and of Plain -
Unbroken Forehead from the East
Unto the East - again -

It reaches to the Fence -
It wraps it, Rail by Rail,
Till it is lost in Fleeces -
It flings a Crystal Vail

On Stump - and Stack - and Stem -
The Summer's empty Room -
Acres of Joints - where Harvests were -
Recordless - but for them -

It Ruffles Wrists of Posts -
As Ancles of a Queen -
Then stills it's Artisans - like Swans -
Denying they have been -

Niles:

It sifts from Leaden Sieves -
 It powders all the **Wood** -
 It fills with Alabaster Wool
 The wrinkles of the Road -

It scatters like the Birds
Condenses like a Flock -
Like Juggler's Flowers situates
Upon a Baseless Arc -

It transverses yet halts -
Disperses as it stays -
Then curls itself in Capricorn,
Denying that it was -

Before turning to the 1863 affiliate poem, I will first examine the poem's role in the context of its fascicle. "It sifts from Leaden Sieves" is the first poem on the first sheet in Fascicle 24. The fascicle consists of eighteen poems across six sheets. The first sheet contains "It sifts from Leaden Sieves" (F291), "Like Mighty Foot Lights – burned the Red" (F507), "A Pit – but Heaven over it –" (F508), and "A curious Cloud surprised the Sky" (F509), all of which address the way the Civil War affects both those fighting in the war, and their families back home (*Emily Dickinson's Poems* 248-9). Editors have dated this fascicle as created in 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, influencing the reading of the sheet as a comment on this war. These four poems in combination provide a clear understanding of the snow metaphor which drives "It sifts from Leaden Sieves."

"It sifts from Leaden Sieves" fairly clearly describes falling snow, explaining the logistics of how and where it falls. The snow is as fine as if it were "sift[ed]" from a "Leaden Sieve," as it "powders all the Field" and "fills" the "Wrinkles of the Road." It covers the topography "Of Mountain – and of Plain –," and "reaches the fence," covering it "Rail by Rail," before it lands "On Stump – and Stack – and Stem." The poem ends when the snow melts and the land returns to normal, as nature is able to "deny" that the snow was ever there. Without considering the context, the content and meaning of the poem seem straightforward. However, few, if any, Dickinson poems lend themselves to an analysis this simple. Rather than assuming that the poem simply describes snow, one might wonder what snow represents. The other poems on the sheet can illuminate this issue.

The second poem on the sheet, “Like Mighty Foot Lights – burned the Red,” describes a landscape which the speaker tries to control as a director of a play might control the actors:

Like Mighty Foot Lights – burned the Red
 At Bases of the Trees -
 The far Theatricals of Day
 Exhibiting - to These -

'Twas Universe - that did applaud -
 While Chiefest – of the Crowd -
 Enabled by his Royal Dress -
 Myself distinguished God –

The speaker views the battlefield as a play which they direct, saying that the “Foot Lights” rest “At Bases of the Trees” as part of the “Theatricals of Day.” The image of “burn[ing]” at the “foot” is reminiscent of a bomb on the battlefield, reminding the reader of the fire under which soldiers fall. As Dominic Mastroianni explains, the speaker paints the events of the Civil War as part of a complex, theatrical experience in the first stanza of the poem (144). However, as Mastroianni notes, the speaker may not ultimately decide to view the war as theatrical. The play the speaker manipulates seems to be for the universe, as it is the “Universe” that “did applaud,” but the power to direct the play comes not from the universe, but from “God,” who is “Chiefest,” the speaker “enabled by his Royal Dress.” The last line of the poem complicates this notion slightly, as it could indicate that the speaker is the “distinguished God” or that the speaker “distinguished God” from the others in the crowd. These two possible meanings give the speaker two very different levels of power – one in which they are the power orchestrating the battle for the entertainment of others, and one in which they derive their power from God. However, even in the reading where the speaker sees God among the crowd, this still

emphasizes the theatrical elements of the battle, as even God watches the battle for entertainment with the crowd.

Faith Barrett argues that Dickinson frames most of her Civil War poetry in the context of landscapes such as this one, and suggests that

by representing the horror of war through landscape description, Dickinson also points insistently toward the limitations of the romantic lexicon....[She] represents death and violence as events that may profoundly separate the witness from the suffering individual and the poet-speaker from her audience. (144)

In the case of “Like Mighty Foot Lights – burned the Red,” as well as other poems on the sheet, Dickinson provides the landscape of the play to draw a parallel between the war and a play, pointing out the limitations of poetry in properly describing war, while simultaneously emphasizing the distance between the “poet-speaker” described by Barrett and the war itself. The speaker in this poem does not understand the complexity of war and the horrors of a battlefield, having only the metaphor of a play to compare it to. The speaker uses this comparison to trivialize the experience of war, reducing it to something observed for entertainment, and even goes so far as to suggest that the speaker themselves control the war as “distinguished God.”

This understanding of the role of the speaker, the landscape, and the war helps clarify the events of “It sifts from Leaden Sieves,” as it too focuses on landscape. Importantly, Mastroianni points out that the Fascicle 24 affiliate is the only of the five “versions” that includes the word “field” in the second line rather than “wood” (138). This strongly suggests that the poem describes a battlefield, given both the contrast to the other versions and affiliate of the poem, and the context of the sheet. Further, Barrett stresses the same metaphor of snow in another Civil War poem – “They dropped like Flakes -,” a poem which “liken[s] soldiers falling in battle to falling flakes of snow”

(145). This suggests that the snow in “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” may in fact be bodies falling on the battlefield, covering up the natural landscape. By this reading, the poem ends with the public refusing to acknowledge the war, “denying” that the soldiers died at all.

However, Mastroianni suggests that this is not the only way to read the snow in this poem. He suggests that the snow can also represent the cold, indifferent ignorance of the war by the general population at the time. The snow, as a metaphor for refusing to acknowledge the war, covers everything on the battlefield, silencing the war from the public, and allowing them to “deny” the war at the close of the poem. Further, Mastroianni also argues that the snow could symbolize the falling bodies themselves among this ignorance, as the public would perceive the way these bodies fall and cover the battlefield as silent and insignificant if they did not pay attention to the war. This perspective is further enforced by the fact that the snow hardly disturbs the “Ancles of a Queen,” the only overtly feminine aspect of the poem. As northern women were far from the war, instead tending to the home and the children, the snow, and thus the war, does not disrupt the feminine aspects of the landscape. The snow only disrupts the “an[k]les” of the queen, ultimately not impacting much of her body, as the war did not directly affect the women. Much like the understanding of the war as theatrical in “Like Mighty Foot Lights – burned the Red,” this poem misunderstands the war as something which can be disregarded as unimportant, an observation which ultimately reflects on the speaker rather than war itself.

The sheet furthers the public understanding of the war in, “A Pit – but Heaven over it -,” the third poem on the sheet, which describes the way in which the public

interacted with the war. The speaker of the poem is perched at the place between “Heaven” and the “pit,” as these are the only two planes in the poem. In her discussion of Civil War journalism, Barrett argues that, at the time, “pit” often referred to a grave (183), implying that in this case the pit may be symbolic of death. Mastroianni argues that the pit represents the battlefield, citing the fact that most poems on the sheet address the battlefield (146). However, falling on the battlefield during the Civil War would inevitably mean death, making these two interpretations ostensibly the same. The speaker observes that

To stir would be to slip-
 To look would be to drop –
 To dream – to sap the Prop
 That holds my chances up

Despite being at least temporarily safe outside the pit, something that should make them happy, the speaker is made miserable by the fear of dropping into it, unable to “stir,” “look,” or “dream.” As the poem goes on, the speaker becomes obsessed with the possibility of dropping to the pit, saying that “The depth is all my thought.” They are unable to think of anything else.

Near the end of the poem, the speaker gains a “Bomb,” which creates both a literal and ironic “calm.” The “Bomb,” an obvious symbol of war, can serve to protect the speaker from falling into the pit, but could also explode and kill the speaker. A constant reminder of the war, the bomb ultimately does not give the speaker any control over their fate or the war itself, showing the way that bystanders of the war feel as they are unable to control what happens to their loved ones, or to control whether or not the war reaches them. This poem serves to contrast with the first two poems on the sheet, showing that

despite the distant attitude of the onlookers of the war, they are affected in some way by it, and must acknowledge the war whether they wish to or not.

The final poem on the sheet, “A curious cloud surprised the Sky,” serves to bring some closure and clarity to the sheet, considering the role of the sheet itself:

A curious Cloud surprised the Sky,
 'Twas like a sheet with Horns;
 The sheet was Blue -
 The Antlers Gray -
 It almost touched the Lawns.

So low it leaned - then statelier drew -
 And trailed like robes away;
 A Queen adown a satin aisle,
 Had not the majesty.

The cloud here represents war. The “surprise” to the “Sky” intends to mirror the shock of the violence of Civil War on the public. The “sheet” is “Blue” like the Union soldier uniforms, with “gray” “horns,” in reference to the gray color of Confederate army uniforms. These horns show for the first time on the sheet that the war does ultimately provide a negative impact on the country, as horns are often associated with evil and the devil. Since the horns are gray, the poem suggests that the Confederacy provides the negative aspect of the war, as without the gray, the cloud would just be a calm blue cloud, which does not threaten the sky or the “lawns” where the citizens of the country reside. This coloration shows that the sheet addresses the tensions between these two armies, and the way that their fighting affects the country in the way that it “almost touch[es] the Lawns” of everyday life.

The poem goes on to describe the feminine beauty of the departure of the sheet from the view of the public, saying that even a “Queen” “had not the majesty,” showing like “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” the strong tie between feminine roles and ignorance of

the war. This makes sense given the fact that those not fighting in the war, primarily women, did not have to think deeply about the issues of the war. The last stanza also points out that the “sheet” “trails” “away,” suggesting that after reading the sheet, these female readers will not change their way of thinking about the war and will instead continue to ignore the carnage and violence of the war, returning the final state of the sheet to the same mood expressed in the first poem – “It sifts from Leaden Sieves.”

In the context of this sheet, it makes sense for the 1863 affiliate of “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” to contain drastically different language than the 1883 affiliate, as Dickinson composed it in part to fit within the context of this fascicle. The aspects of the poem which were removed in the affiliate sent to Niles pertain to the physical descriptions of the landscape which is characteristic of its nature as a Civil War poem; the Niles affiliate of 1883 removes these landscape descriptions in favor of describing the nature of the snowflakes. The fascicle affiliate requires these descriptions of the human features in the landscape to highlight the underlying metaphor for falling bodies on the battlefield, thus explaining a great deal of the variation between these poems. However, the poem which Dickinson sends to Niles also holds the added significance of her desire to publish this affiliate, which further complicates the changes made between these affiliates.

In 1876, Dickinson’s friend and correspondent Helen Hunt Jackson encouraged her to submit some of her poetry to a series of poetry and prose books Jackson’s publisher planned to create called the “No Name Series” (Sewall 581). Jackson assured Dickinson that the work would omit her name, and that no one would know the work was hers unless Dickinson claimed it. Convinced by Jackson’s assurances, Dickinson

submitted “Success is counted sweetest” for publication in the poetry book in the series, which publisher Thomas Niles accepted (Sewall 582). Niles released the book, *A Masque of Poets*, in late 1878. Upon publication, many critics thought that Emerson wrote the poem which Dickinson authored, a result which likely pleased Dickinson (Sewall 583).

In March of 1883, Dickson wrote to Niles to thank him for including her work in the book, as well as to submit two additional poems for his consideration for publication (Sewall 584). Her puzzling note read:

Dear Friend,
I bring you a chill Gift – My Cricket and the Snow. A base return indeed,
for the delightful Book, which I infer from you, but an earnest one.
With thanks,
E. Dickinson (“To Thomas Niles” 768)

With this note, Dickinson enclosed her 1883 affiliate of “It Sifts from Leaden Sieves,” and “Further in Summer than the Birds,” as well as an actual dead cricket (“To Thomas Niles” 768). Although the tone of this letter resembles that of most Dickinson correspondences – cryptic and secretive – the indication of the subject matter of the poems differs from the usual aura of mystery shrouding Dickinson’s poetry (Gordon 56). Adding to the unusual tone of this letter is the fact that Dickinson, who titled almost none of her poems, seems to give these two titles. The affiliate of “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” sent to Niles has “Snow” printed across the top of the sheet in the way other poets print titles on their poetry (Variorum). Interestingly, the same does not hold true of “Further in Summer than the Birds,” though she seems to indicate that she intends “My Cricket” to be its title in the way she intends “Snow” for “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” (Variorum).

Though Niles does not accept these poems for publication (Sewall 585), Dickinson’s special attention to this poem – revising it so heavily, returning to it after

nearly two decades, submitting it for publication, and giving it a title – indicates that Dickinson to some extent felt that this poem presented her in the way she desired the public to see her. Because of this, some of the most interesting aspects of this poem come in their differences from other Dickinson poems which did not come before the public eye. Something about this poem drew her to think that they suited the interests of public publication rather than the private publication of her fascicles and made her comfortable with the idea of sharing them openly:

It sifts from Leaden Sieves -
It powders all the Wood -
It fills with Alabaster Wool
The wrinkles of the Road -

It scatters like the Birds -
Condenses like a Flock -
Like Juggler's Flowers situates
Upon a Baseless Arc –

It transverses yet halts -
Disperses as it stays -
Then curls itself in Capricorn,
Denying that it was -

Compared to the 1863 affiliate of “It sifts from Leaden Sieves,” the 1883 affiliate does not simplify the metaphors and language in the poem. The 1863 fascicle affiliate (Variorum) systematically refers to each aspect of the landscape, referring to mountains, plains (6), rail (10), stump, stack, stem (13), and posts (17). In the 1883 affiliate to Niles (Variorum), Dickinson moves from a straight description of the landscape to a lyrical description of the motion of the snow, and from a more stagnant interpretation to a fluid one, in which the snow has more autonomy. She says the snow “scatters like the birds / Condenses like a Flock” (5-6), and “transverses, yet halts - / Disperses as it stays –” (9-10), bringing the snow to life in this affiliate in a way that the 1863 affiliate does not even

attempt. Dickinson ends with a complex image of the swirling snow, saying that it “curls itself in Capricorn” (11), similar to the twisted horns of a goat, the symbol of Capricorn. The jump Dickinson makes between these two affiliates makes sense when considering the context in which each of these poems sits, as the Niles affiliate refers to actual snow, while the fascicle affiliate describes falling human bodies.

Regardless of how Dickinson considered the fascicles, be it as a storage method for her poems, her own personal form of publication, or a thematic compilation of poems she wrote to fit together, she specifically chose the poems to appear in the fascicle together (Socarides 73). Because of this, reading the 1863 affiliate outside of the fascicle context makes little sense, as it clearly falls within the larger narrative created by the fascicle page. When considering this context, the most significant change from the 1863 affiliate to the 1883 affiliate is the difference of message. The 1863 affiliate, as discussed, centers not around snow, but the battlefield of the Civil War. When Dickinson revises the poem to send to Niles, she modifies the poem from centering around this idea to centering around actual snow. While the 1863 affiliate is a poem about war and ignorance, the 1883 affiliate is simply a poem about the beauty of nature.

The 1865 version, which almost exactly resembles the affiliate sent to Niles, provides interesting insight as to why Dickinson may have chosen not to send Niles the 1863 affiliate. As mentioned before, Dickinson did not choose to send the 1865 version to anyone, but also did not sew it into a fascicle, though she still made fascicles in that year. Instead, the poem exists outside of the fascicle context as a standalone poem. This suggests that the 1863 affiliate was intended to exist only in the context of the fascicle, and that Dickinson felt that removing it unaltered from that context detracted from its

meaning. With this in mind, the choice to send the heavily revised affiliate to Niles makes sense, as Dickinson included only a couple of poems, and could not provide or trust Niles to provide the necessary context for the 1863 affiliate to convey the deeper meaning she intended.

With any poet who titled their work, scholars would consider these two affiliates two distinctive poems. If Dickinson had more significantly altered the first stanza between the two affiliates, little room for speculation would remain – the poems resemble one another only in their ties to the subject of snow. Clearly, something more occurs between these two affiliates than in Dickinson’s poems containing her traditional variants, which switch out only a few words for alternate meanings. These poems do something much more complex – changing not just a few words to modify the meaning of a line, but changing 87 percent of the words to restructure the meaning of the entire poem. However, the shared first line forces these poems to be considered as one.

Interestingly, when these affiliates were first published in *Second Series* (1891) and *Bolts of Melody* (1945), edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and Millicent Todd Bingham, they were published separately, with the editors calling the 1863 affiliate “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” and the 1883 affiliate “It Sifts from Leaden Sieves II.” Though Mabel and Millicent would not have as much context as Sue, this separate publication of the two affiliates suggests that they understood that in the contexts the poems were presented, the distance in the time between them, and the differences in language they contain there were enough of a difference that these two poems needed to be published separately. The fact that Dickinson’s contemporaries saw these poems as unique suggests strongly that they are affiliates rather than versions.

Therefore, I argue that scholars should regard these two poems not as versions of the same poem, but as two distinct poems. Within the context of the other poem on its fascicle sheet, the 1863 affiliate of “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” presents an analysis of the Civil War, as compared to the 1883 affiliate, which focuses on the beauty of snow as an aspect of nature. Similarly, the two poems serve completely different functions – the 1863 affiliate contributed to Dickinson’s personal publication, while Dickinson prepared the 1883 affiliate for public consumption (Sewall 584). In addition to their vastly different meanings and intents, the poems contain almost none of the same language, and appear two decades apart. Because of this, these poems hardly resemble each other, and therefore are, in fact, not the same poem.

Brother/ Sister of Ophir/ Ingots: Affiliate Poems in Dickinson’s Letters

Turning to my last example, I will examine three affiliate poems which do not even share a first line. Unlike the affiliates beginning “I hide myself within my flower” and “It sifts from Leaden Sieves,” these three affiliates were only circulated via letters, and none were placed in fascicles. In this section, I will examine the way in which Dickinson created affiliate poems through her correspondences.

In 1878, Dickinson composed a two-line poem on a scrap of brown wrapping paper smaller than a playing card. The poem reads “Brother of Ingots – Ah Peru –/
Empty the Hearts that purchased you –,” with no further context. In the same year, Dickinson wrote a letter to her sister-in-law, Susan Dickinson, that reads: “Susan – I dreamed of you, last night, and send a Carnation to indorse it–/ Sister of Ophir – Ah Peru

–/ Subtle the Sum that purchase you –”. This letter, which Dickinson sent along with the aforementioned “Carnation,” is written with a clear delineation between letter and poem.

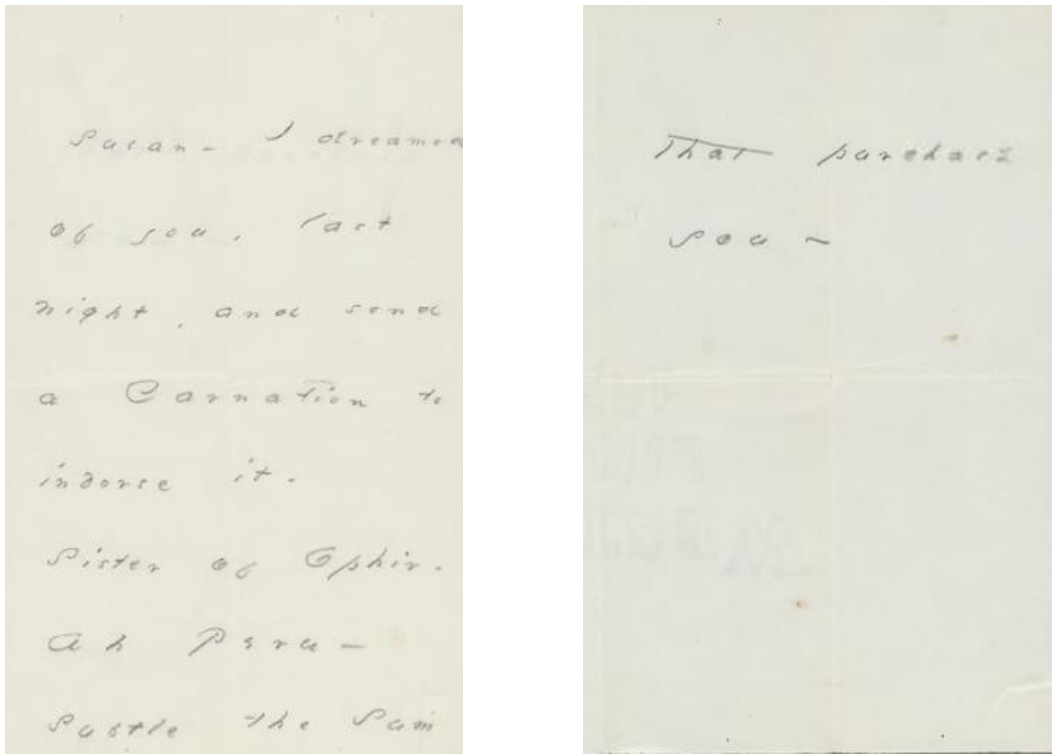


Figure 5: Letter to Susan Dickinson containing "Sister of Ophir- Ah Peru-
Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

The clarity of this delineation disappears when Dickinson composed another poem to her friend Sarah Tuckerman two years later in a letter reading:

Dear friend,
I thought of you, although I never saw your friend,
Brother of Ophir
Bright Adieu –
Honor, the shortest route
To you –.

This letter/ poem combination has a much more confusing structure than the more straightforward letter sent to Sue. In the letter sent to Tuckerman, the end of the letter moves directly into the poem without a clear indication of what is letter and what is

poem. The only indication of the first part being a letter is the indentation at the beginning of the first line, and the lack of capitalization and line breaks which are customary in Dickinson's poetry. However, the similar meter and spacing of the letter and the poem strongly suggest that they are more closely related than some of her other poems embedded in letters, such as the previously mentioned letter to Sue.

Franklin considers all three of these poems as versions of the same poem, numbering them all 1462. Although Johnson seems to acknowledge that these three poems have few similarities, demarking them as A, B, and C versions in his reading edition, he too gives them one number, in his case 1366. Yet, even without a complex discussion of the context, themes, and meanings of these three "versions," by examining the wording alone, it is clear that these three poems share very little meaning in the two words they all share, "of" and "you" (shown with differences bolded below).⁵

Susan:
Sister of Ophir - Ah Peru -
Subtle the Sum
that purchase you -

Sarah Tuckerman:
Brother of Ophir
Bright Adieu -
Honor, the shortest route
To you -

Retainer:
Brother of Ingots – Ah Peru –
Empty the Hearts that purchased you –

The poem beginning "Brother of Ingots – Ah Peru -" is the hardest to place in context because of the lack of context which Dickinson's preservation provides. The tiny scrap of paper on which the poem was written contains no other markings aside from the

⁵ The differences bolded above are differences between all three poems. However, there are more similarities between each pair of poems within the three. For example, the Susan and Tuckerman affiliates share "Ophir," the Susan and retain affiliates share "Peru," and the retainer and Tuckerman affiliates share "Brother." Each of these additional shared words functions differently in each of their subsequent poems.

poem itself and was not stored with any companion poems or drafts. Some scholars, namely Domhnall Mitchell, argue that this poem serves as the beginning draft of the latter two affiliates, and should be treated as an unfinished draft of the two other poems contained in the letters (Mitchell 165). However, “Sister of Ophir – Ah Peru -” and “Brother of Ophir” each share only three and two words with the “draft” poem, respectively, suggesting strongly that they do not share more than a similar structure and a few words.

In this first poem, Dickinson highlights the relationship between “Ingots,” referencing the riches she indicates are found in the praised “Peru,” and the “Empty” morals of those who stress the value of material wealth. On a surface level, the poem condemns an obsession with materialism, saying that the “Hearts” of those who “purchase” “Ingots” are “Empty,” and suggesting that those who are interested in superficial things such as wealth have no moral compass, and thus an “Empty...Hear[t].” Through this reading, “Ingots” symbolize material possessions, especially extravagant and exotic ones from places like “Peru,” and the poem condemns those who spend their time and money worrying about these types of items. This reading assumes that “Brother of” refers to a person so obsessed with “Ingots” that they value money as much or more than their family. In this case, the use of familial language stresses the close relationship between the greedy subject and the wealth they desire.

However, another, perhaps stronger, case can be made for the implications this poem has regarding slavery. Though the Civil War had ended thirteen years prior to the composition of this poem, the country was still very much living with the legacy of slavery, especially through the rise of Jim Crow laws the year this poem was written.

Through this reading, the phrase “Brother of Ingots” takes on a much more jarring meaning, suggesting that the subject of the poem is more like a form of currency than a human being, and thus has stronger ties to “Ingots” than to his family. In a more optimistic reading, “Brother” could serve to bring the slave subject closer to the reader, reminding them that the slave is just as human as them or their family, before juxtaposing that humanity with the exchange of humans for money. The poem does stress the foreign nature of the slaves, pointing out that they are not from America by emphasizing “Peru,” a symbol for anywhere not in the U.S. Through the lens of slavery, “Empty the Hearts” still refers to a lack of morality, though in this case in reference to the immorality of the slave trade. The word “purchased” stresses the idea of slavery, as it implies that the “Brother,” a human being, was the victim of purchase.

In the same year, Dickinson sends the poem beginning “Sister of Ophir— Ah Peru—” to Susan. The poem, accompanied by a carnation, addresses similar themes to the first poem, but does not do so in remotely the same way. Martha Dickinson Bianchi, Susan Dickinson’s daughter, writes in her introduction to *The Single Hound*:

There must have been a lure for the almost cloistered soul in the warmth of [Emily Dickinson’s] only brother Austin’s youthful home, and the radiant atmosphere of my Mother [Susan] with her three children growing up around her. ‘Only Woman in the World,’ ‘Avalanche of Sun,’ ‘Sister of Ophir,’ she calls her.
(xi)

Given this insight, it seems clear that the poem acts as a direct address to Susan, calling her “Sister of Ophir.” Ophir, referencing a location in the Bible known for unmatched beauty and wealth, reflects the great respect and love which Dickinson had for Susan, as well as the way she idealized her, perhaps in an expression of love. Unlike “Ingots” in the

first poem, “Ophir” reflects a positive comparison, as does calling Susan her “Sister,” no doubt in reference to their legal status as such.

After this initial praise, the poem takes a more negative turn. Still in the first line, the reference to “Peru” once again symbolizes a faraway place. Though the reference to Peru can be read as a positive one, as Peru was producing a wide range of lavish items at the time, the mention of such a distant place shows the emotional distance which Dickinson may have felt existed between herself and Sue. Especially given Dickinson’s reclusive nature, choosing a place as far as Peru also shows that Dickinson does not feel this distance will ever be fully closed.

Dickinson provides the source of this distance in the second line, saying that a “Subtle” “Sum” has “purchase[d]” Sue away from her. Unlike the “Ingots” poem, Dickinson sees this removal as ongoing, using the present “purchase” rather than “purchased,” implying that the state of removal continues into the present and will continue into the future. Further, the suggestion that it took very little to “purchase” Sue suggests that Sue is undervaluing herself by allowing herself to be bought for so little. The language of purchase and the reference to an emotional distance strongly suggests that this poem references Austin’s marriage to Sue, as Dickinson resented Austin for removing her friend from her, and at the time marriage was seen as a monetary transaction.

This reading is strengthened by the letter which accompanies this poem: “Susan – I dreamed of you last night and send a Carnation to indorse it -” Given that at the time carnations symbolized strength and healing, the letter likely regards the death of Sue’s son, Gilbert, in 1875. Though he died three years prior to this letter, Gilbert’s death had

enormous negative effects on all members of the Dickinson family, and resulted in the decline of Sue and Austin's marriage. As both Sue and Dickinson were still feeling the effects of Gilbert's death in 1878, this letter strongly suggests that Dickinson's "dream" was in reference to their shared pain over Gilbert and prompted Dickinson to send Sue a carnation as a symbol of her ability to get through the sorrow, as well as to survive her failing marriage. In company with this letter, the poem paints a more complex picture of Dickinson comforting Sue in the first line, while acknowledging their emotional distance, and trying to get Sue to face the negative aspects of her marriage in the second, perhaps even encouraging her to stand up to Austin, who "purchase[s]" her for too "Subtle" a "Sum."

Two years later, Dickinson sent another poem referencing "Ophir," this time to her childhood friend, Sarah Tuckerman. Scholars believe that this letter was in reference to the death of Elihu Root, Tuckerman's husband's student, as the letter was sent the day after his death (*Variorum*). Because of this, the "friend" mentioned in the letter is very likely Root. Due to the close placement of "your friend," as well as the comma leading into the poem, "Brother of Ophir" almost certainly refers directly to the "friend," Root. The mention of "Ophir," as well as the use of the word "Brother," elicits religious imagery, implying that Root is Dickinson's "Brother" in the religious sense, and in this case using "Ophir" as a paradise, or heaven. The use of "Ophir" as a stand in for heaven is enforced by the second line: "Bright Adieu -" This line suggests that in death, "Adieu," Root has gone somewhere "Bright," or heaven.

The third line lauds Root, indicating that his "Honor" in life has brought him to heaven. Dickinson writes that "Honor" is "the shortest route/ To you [Root]," or that the

fastest way for someone else, such as Dickinson or Tuckerman, to get to heaven, where Root is, is through acting in an honorable way, as Root did while he was alive. This language, especially in combination with the religious references at the start of the poem, suggests that Dickinson strives to comfort Tuckerman regarding the death of her “friend.” Since Dickinson admits that she “never saw [Tuckerman’s] friend,” the poem has a generic tone, sounding almost as though it could apply to any recently deceased person.

These three poems no doubt have some similarities, but none strong enough to warrant classifying them as the same poem. As mentioned before, on a surface level, the language itself varies almost completely from one poem to another. As compared to the other pairs of poems I address in this thesis, the first lines of the poems are not even the same, thus distinguishing them even within the existing system Dickinson scholars use to denote sameness. Deeper than that even, each poem addresses a different theme, and does so in a very different way. To further examine the implications which the similarities between these poems may have, I will address each pair separately.

“Brother of Ingots – Ah Peru -” addresses the horrors of slavery, condemning those who owned slaves prior to the Civil War. The poem focuses largely on the idea of purchase, framing race relations in the context of slavery. “Sister of Ophir – Ah Peru -,” which shares the “Ah Peru” reference that the “Brother of Ingots” poem includes, also addresses the idea of purchase, in this case regarding the implied monetary transaction of marriage. Although “Brother of Ingots” addresses a much more serious kind of subservience, both poems confront a system in which human beings are effectively purchased and forced into a position of inferiority, taken far from their original life and connections. However, these poems address this common theme through the vessel of

very different situations. Just as it would not make sense to argue that slavery and marriage are the same, it does not make sense to argue that these two compositions are the same poem.

In contrast, “Sister of Ophir – Ah Peru -” and “Brother of Ophir” share almost nothing except for the reference to familial ties and to “Ophir.” However, even these similarities reference drastically different things – Sue is Dickinson’s sister-in-law, whereas “Brother” holds a religious connotation, and “Ophir” refers to a beautiful life and heaven respectively. “Sister of Ophir” goes on to describe subservience and distance from the speaker, while “Brother of Ophir” celebrates the life of Root, and draws the speaker toward him, pointing out that “Honor” will bring others to heaven, where Root allegedly has gone. Therefore, the two poems not only have two very different themes – the lived experience of Sue’s marriage and the death of Root – they address these themes in very different ways. As “Sister of Ophir” stresses a distance between speaker and reader, “Brother of Ophir” strives to bring the two closer together. Because of this, the two poems have far more opposite features than they do in common and can almost be considered foils of one another.

Finally, though “Brother of Ingots – Ah Peru -” and “Brother of Ophir” share a reference to “Brother,” the similarities between the poems ends there. “Brother of Ingots” focuses on sympathizing with the oppressed group, criticizing the oppressors through referring to them as having “Empty...Hearts.” The central tone of the poem is that of sympathy for the slaves, whereas in “Brother of Ophir,” the speaker lauds and celebrates the subject unapologetically. As with “Sister of Ophir,” there is also a distance in “Brother of Ingots” between the speaker and the subject which “Brother of Ophir” lacks.

While “Brother of Ingots” and “Sister of Ophir” act almost as directly opposite poems, “Brother of Ingots” and “Brother of Ophir” share so little that they have no meaningful relationship to one another.

Therefore, these three poems cannot logically be considered versions of the same poem but must instead be regarded as separate poems. The similarities between these poems is minimal and the differences abundant. If any poet besides Dickinson composed three poems this different, no scholar would consider them the same poem. However, since Dickinson did not title her poems, the few words these poems share have become distorted into meaningful similarities that do not exist between them. Therefore, these three affiliate poems should be categorized distinctly.

Conclusions

As shown through the case studies provided in this thesis, the current system of identifying Dickinson’s poems by their first lines omits affiliate poems from her body of work that can provide helpful insight into her writing. The two poems beginning “I hide myself within my flower” shows that affiliates appearing in different fascicles can provide very different perspectives on the same theme, as the two affiliates address two different modes of influencing the “you” in the poem, both of which ultimately fail. The two poems beginning “It sifts from Leaden Sieves” shows the way in which affiliates operate in different ways in the spheres of public and private publication. These affiliates show the way that one affiliate changes into another through moving from one of these spheres to the other, providing insight into the way Dickinson viewed these two spheres. Finally, Brother of Ophir and its affiliates show the way that affiliates within letters can

address very different audiences and ideas while still somehow being incorrectly conflated as the same poem by the editorial standards scholars use to identify Dickinson's poems. I have also shown that these three case studies are not examples of revision or versions, but are rather different poems, by also examining "A little over Jordan" as an example of versions of the same poem because of these versions' shared contexts and language.

The idea of affiliate poems which I have established calls for the creation of a new standard to identify Dickinson poems in order to illuminate the affiliate poems I have pointed out as well as others in Dickinson's body of work. What this new standard should be, however, is not clear. In the absence of a title, the first line seems to be the next best identifier of a poem. These poems could be presented as Mabel and Millicent Todd present "It sifts from Leaden Sieves" – as I and II, or could be published with the first line and the approximate year they were composed. However, determining which of Dickinson's poems are affiliates rather than versions requires looking carefully at the contexts in which the supposed versions appear, as well as their language, to determine if the poems should be considered affiliates, or are simply versions.

In that same vein, my examination of Dickinson's manuscripts, letters, and fascicles also broadens the way in which scholars think about publication within Dickinson's work. It is because Dickinson's editors never published these affiliates side by side outside of the variorum edition that they have become conflated into one poem, yet it is also the distance that Dickinson placed between the affiliates through placing them in different contexts that makes the poems different in the first place. This contradiction of needing to examine these poems in their original distinct contexts in

order to place them into the same context of a reading edition to understand them as different is likely at the root of why these poems have been conflated for so long- to see the poem's differences, they must simultaneously be studied in context, and published in an edition largely devoid of context. Through this lens, Cristanne Miller's edition of Dickinson's poems, *Emily Dickinson's Poems As She Preserved Them*, may address this contradiction slightly, as she publishes poems and affiliates which appear in two separate fascicles two separate times in her edition, within the context of the fascicle. While this is an improvement from the lack of context Johnson and Franklin's reading editions provide, Miller falls short by not publishing non-fascicle affiliates separately, again conflating them as versions. She also does not offer a system for identifying the affiliates she publishes, or even suggest that they may be affiliates rather than repeats of the same poem in separate fascicles, publishing the poems without comment. However, the format Miller creates, if presented with an explanation for readers regarding how to read affiliates, may provide the best format to present affiliate poems, suggesting that editorial identification may not matter as much as context.

I do not claim to have created a standard for what makes poems affiliates rather than versions. Rather, I have shown that affiliate poems exist, and that these poems are not receiving scholarly attention because of their status as versions. The concept of affiliate poems challenges the significance of a first line entirely, and calls editors to reexamine what makes a poem a version of another poem. Furthermore, the concept of affiliate poems also begs the question of if these kinds of poems exist for other, less studied female poets of the nineteenth century. Dickinson was not the only poet of her time that did not publish her work, and there is a distinct possibility that other poets like

her have poems which have been erased from their body of work by being deemed versions of the same poem. With the idea of affiliate poems, poems by other authors may also come to light.

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